AN
ESSAY
ON
PAINTING.

AN

ESSAY

ON

PAINTING:

IN TWO EPISTLES

TO

MR. *ROMNEY.*

Συγγενειαν τινα προς ποιητικὴν εχειν ἡ τεχνη εὑρισκεται, και κοινη τις αμφοιν ειναι φαντασια,

——ἁ λεγειν οἱ ποιηται εχουσι ταυτα εν τῳ γραμματι σημαινουσα.

PHILOSTRATUS.

Patet omnibus Ars, nondum est occupata, multum ex illâ etiam futuris relictum est.

SENEC. Epist. 33.

BY WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

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M.DCC.LXXXI.

EPISTLE

THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT

OF THE FIRST EPISTLE.

Introduction—The flourishing state of Art in this country—Disadvantages attending the modern Painter of Portraits—Short encomium on this branch of Art, with the account of its origin in the story of the Maid of Corinth—Superiority of Historical Painting—Some account of the Greeks who excelled in it—Its destruction and revival in Italy—Short account of the most eminent Italian and Spanish Painters—Those of Flanders and France—The corruption of Art among the latter.

TO

TO

Mr. GEORGE ROMNEY.

EPISTLE I.

BLEST be the hour, when fav'ring gales reſtore
The travell'd artiſt to his native ſhore!
His mind enlighten'd, and his fancy fraught
With fineſt forms by ancient genius wrought;
Whoſe magic beauty charm'd, with ſpell ſublime,
The ſcythe of Ruin from the hand of Time,
And mov'd the mighty leveller to ſpare
Models of grace ſo exquiſitely fair.
While you, whom Painting thus inſpir'd to roam,
Bring theſe rich ſtores of ripen'd judgment home;
While now, attending my accompliſh'd friend,
Science and Taſte his ſoften'd colours blend;
Let the fond Muſe, tho' with a tranſient view,
The progreſs of her ſiſter art purſue;

Eager in tracing from remoteſt time
The ſteps of Painting through each favour'd clime,
To praiſe her deareſt ſons, whoſe daring aim
Gain'd their bright ſtations on the heights of fame,
And mark the paths by which her partial hand
Conducts her ROMNEY to this radiant band.

Painting, ſweet Nymph! now leaves in lifeleſs trance
Exhauſted Italy, and tinſel France,
And ſees in Britain, with exulting eyes,
Her vot'ries proſper, and her glories riſe.
Yet tho', my friend, thy art is thus careſt,
[illegible] with the homage of the public bleſt,
And flouriſhes with growing beauty fair,
The child of Majeſty's adoptive care,
The youthful artiſt ſtill is doom'd to feel
Obſtruction's chilling hand, that damps his zeal:
Th' imperious voice of Vanity and Pride
Bids him from Fancy's region turn aſide,
And quit the magic of her ſcene, to trace
The vacant lines of ſome unmeaning face:
E'en in this work his wiſhes ſtill are croſt,
And all the efforts of his art are loſt;

For when the canvas, with the mirror's truth,
Reflects the perfect form of age or youth,
The fond affections of the partial mind
The eye of judgment with delusion blind:
Each mother bids him brighter tints employ,
And give new spirit to her booby boy;
Nor can the painter, with his utmost art,
Express the image in the lover's heart:
Unconscious of the change the seasons bring,
Autumnal beauty asks the rose of spring,
And vain self-love, in every age the same,
Will fondly urge some [illegible]
The luckless painter, destin'd to submit,
Mourns the lost likeness which he once had hit,
And, doom'd to groundless censure, bears alone
The grievous load of errors not his own.
   Nor is it Pride, or Folly's vain command,
That only fetters his creative hand;
At Fashion's nod he copies as they pass
Each quaint reflection from her crowded glass.
The formal coat, with intersecting line,
Mars the free graces of his fair design;

The towering cap he marks with like diſtreſs,
And all the motley maſs of female dreſs.
The hoop extended with enormous ſize,
The corks that like a promontory riſe;
The ſtays of deadly ſteel, in whoſe embrace
The tyrant Faſhion tortures injur'd Grace.
But Art, deſpairing over ſhapes like theſe
To caſt an air of elegance and eaſe,
Invokes kind Fancy's aid—ſhe comes to ſpread
Her magic ſpells—the Gothic forms are fled;
And ſee, to crown the painter's juſt deſire,
Her free [illegible], and her light attire!
Th' ambitious artiſt wiſhes to purſue
This brilliant plan with more extenſive view,
And with adopted character to give
A laſting charm to make the portrait live;
All points of art by one nice effort gain,
Delight the learned, and content the vain;
Make hiſtory to life new value lend *,
And in the comprehenſive picture blend
The ancient hero with the living friend.

* Ver. 77. See NOTE I.

Moſt fair device! " but, ah! what foes to ſenſe,
What broods of motley monſters riſe from hence!"
The ſtrange pretenſions of each age and ſex
Theſe plans of fancy and of taſte perplex;
For male and female, to themſelves unknown,
Demand a character unlike their own,
Till oft the painter to this quaint diſtreſs
Prefers the awkward ſhapes of common dreſs.
Sweet girls, of mild and penſive ſoftneſs, chooſe
The ſportive emblems of the comic Muſe;
And ſprightly damſels are inclin'd to borrow
The garb of penitence, and tears of ſorrow:
While awkward pride, tho' ſafe from war's alarms,
Round his plump body buckles ancient arms,
And, from an honeſt juſtice of the peace,
Starts up at once a demi-god of Greece;
Too firm of heart by ridicule to fail,
The finiſh'd hero crowns his country hall,
Ordain'd to fill, if fire his glory ſpare,
The lumber-garret of his wiſer heir.

Not leſs abſurd to flatter Nero's eyes *
Aroſe the portrait of coloſſal ſize:
Twice fifty feet th' enormous ſheet was ſpread,
To lift o'er gazing ſlaves the monſter's head,
When impious Folly ſway'd Oppreſſion's rod,
And ſervile Rome ador'd the mimic God.
Think not, my friend, with ſupercilious air,
I rank the portrait as beneath thy care.
Bleſt be the pencil! which from death can ſave †
The ſemblance of the virtuous, wiſe, and brave;
That youth and emulation ſtill may gaze,
On thoſe inſpiring forms of ancient days,
And, from the force of bright example bold,
Rival their worth, "and be what they behold."
Bleſt be the pencil! whoſe conſoling pow'r,
Soothing ſoft Friendſhip in her penſive hour,
Diſpels the cloud, with melancholy fraught,
That abſence throws upon her tender thought.
Bleſt be the pencil! whoſe enchantment gives
To wounded Love the food on which he lives.

* Ver. 100. See NOTE II.

† Ver. 108. See NOTE III.

Rich in this gift, tho' cruel ocean bear
The youth to exile from his faithful fair,
He in ſond dreams hangs o'er her glowing cheek,
Still owns her preſent, and ſtill hears her ſpeak:
Oh! LOVE, it was thy glory to impart
Its infant being to this magic art!
Inſpir'd by thee, the ſoft Corinthian maid, *
Her graceful lover's ſleeping form portray'd:
Her boding heart his near departure knew,
Yet long'd to keep his image in her view:
Pleas'd ſhe beheld the ſteady ſhadow fall,
By the clear lamp upon the even wall:
The line ſhe trac'd with fond preciſion true,
And, drawing, doated on the form ſhe drew:
Nor, as ſhe glow'd with no forbidden fire,
Conceal'd the ſimple picture from her ſire,
His kindred fancy, ſtill to nature juſt,
Copied her line, and form'd the mimic buſt.
Thus from thy power, inſpiring LOVE, we trace
The modell'd image, and the pencil'd face!

* Ver. 126. See NOTE IV.

We pity Genius, when by intereſt led,
His toils but reach the ſemblance of a head;
Yet are thoſe cenſures too ſevere and vain,
That ſcorn the Portrait as the Painter's bane.
Tho' up the mountain winds the arduous road,
That leads to pure Perfection's bright abode,
In humbler walks ſome tempting laurels grow,
Some flowers are gather'd in the vale below:
Youth on the plain collects increaſing force,
To climb the ſteep in his meridian courſe.
While Nature ſees her living models ſhare
The riſing artiſt's unremitting care,
She on his mind her every charm imprints,
Her eaſy poſtures, and her perfect tints,
Till his quick pencil, in maturer hour,
Becomes her rival in creative power.

Yet in theſe paths diſdain a long delay,
While eager Genius points a nobler way:
For ſee! expanding to thy raptur'd gaze,
The epic field a brighter ſcene diſplays!
Here ſtands the temple, where, to merit true,
Fame gives her laurel to the favour'd few:

Whoſe minds, illumin'd with cœleſtial fire,
Direct the pencil, or awake the lyre;
Who trace the ſprings of nature to their ſource,
And by her guidance, with reſiſtleſs force,
The tides of terror and of tranſport roll,
Thro' every channel of the human ſoul!

How few, my friend, tho' millions boaſt the aim,
Leave in this temple an unclouded name!
Vain the attempt, in every age and clime,
Without the ſlow conductors toil and time;
Without that ſecret, ſoul-impelling power,
Infus'd by genius in the natal hour;
And vain with theſe, if bright occaſion's ray
Fail to illuminate the doubtful way.

The elders of thy art, ordain'd to ſtand
In the firſt circle of this honour'd band,
(Whoſe pencil, ſtriving for the nobleſt praiſe,
The heart to ſoften and the mind to raiſe,
Gave life and manners to the finiſh'd piece)
Theſe ſons of glory were the ſons of GREECE!
Hail! throne of genius, hail! what mighty hand
Form'd the bright offspring of this famous land?

First in the annals of the world they ſhine:
Such gifts, O LIBERTY, are only thine;
Thy vital fires thro' kindling ſpirits run,
Thou ſoul of life, thou intellectual ſun;
Thy rays call forth, profuſe and unconfin'd,
The richeſt produce of the human mind.
Firſt taught by thee, the Grecian pencil wrought
The forceful leſſons of exalted thought,
And generouſly gave, at glory's call,
The patriot picture to the public hall.
'Twas then PANÆUS drew, with freedom's train,*
The chief of Marathon's immortal plain.
In glorious triumph o'er the mighty hoſt
That Perſia pour'd in torrents on their coaſt.
There POLYGNOTUS, ſcorning ſervile hire, †
Diſplay'd the embattled ſcene from HOMER's lyre.
His country view'd the gift with fond regard,
And rank'd the painter with their nobleſt bard.
Thy tragic pencil, ARISTIDES, caught ‡
Each varied feeling, and each tender thought,

* Ver. 194. See NOTE V.
† Ver. 198. See NOTE VI.
‡ Ver. 202. See NOTE VII.

While moral virtue ſanctified thy art,
And paſſion gave it empire o'er the heart.
 Correct Parrhaſius firſt to rich deſign *
Gave nice proportion, and the melting line,
Whoſe ſoft extremes from obſervation fly,
And with ideal diſtance cheat the eye.
 The gay, the warm, licentious ZEUXIS drew, †
Voluptuous Beauty in her richeſt hue:
Bade in one form her ſcatter'd rays unite,
And charm'd the view with their collected light.
 But Grace conſign'd, while her fair works he plann'd,
Her ſofteſt pencil to APELLES' hand:
Yet oft to gain ſublimer heights he ſtrove, ‡
Such ſtrong expreſſion mark'd his mimic JOVE,
Inimitably great he ſeem'd to tower,
And paſs the limits of the pencil's power.
 Ye ſons of art, tho' on the gulph of years,
No floating relic of your toil appears,
Yet glory ſhews, in every cultur'd clime,
Your names ſtill radiant thro' the clouds of time.

* Ver. 206. See NOTE VIII.
† Ver. 210. See NOTE IX.
‡ Ver. 216. See NOTE X.

Thy pride, O Rome, inclin'd thee to abhor
Each work that call'd thee from thy ſphere of war:
By Freedom train'd, and favour'd by the Nine,
The powers of eloquence and verſe were thine,
While chilling damps upon the pencil hung,*
Where Tully thunder'd, and where Virgil ſung.
Yet Grecian artiſts had the ſplendid fate,
To triumph o'er the Romans' ſcornful hate.
Their matchleſs works Profuſion toil'd to buy,
Their wonders glitter'd in the public eye,
Till Rome's terrific pomp, and letter'd pride,
Were ſunk in Deſolation's whelming tide.

Oh! lovely Painting! long thy cheering light
Was loſt and buried in barbaric night;
The furious rage of Anarchy effac'd
Each hallow'd character thy hand had trac'd,
And Ign'rance, mutt'ring in her monkiſh cell,
Bound thy free ſoul in her lethargic ſpell.

At length from this long trance thy ſpirit roſe,
In that ſweet vale where ſilver Arno flows;

* Ver. 228. See NOTE XI.

There studious VINCI treasur'd every rule,*
To form the basis of a rising school:
Like early HESIOD, 'twas his fate to shine,
The herald of a master more divine.
Inflam'd by Genius with sublimest rage,
By toil unwearied, and unchill'd by age,
In the fine phrenzy of exalted thought
Gigantic ANGELO his wonders wrought; †
And high, by native strength of spirit rais'd,
The mighty HOMER of the pencil blaz'd.
Taste, Fancy, Judgment, all on RAPHAEL smil'd, ‡
Of Grandeur and of Grace the darling child:
Truth, passion, character, his constant aim,
Both in the human and the heavenly frame,
Th' enchanting painter rules the willing heart,
And shines the finish'd VIRGIL of his art.
The daring JULIO, tho' by RAPHAEL train'd, §
Reach'd not the summit, where his master reign'd;

* Ver. 244. See NOTE XII.
† Ver. 251. See NOTE XIII.
‡ Ver. 254. See NOTE XIV.
§ Ver. 260. See NOTE XV.

Yet

Yet to no common heights of epic ſame,
True Genius guided his adventurous aim.
Thus Statius, ſraught with emulous regard,
Caught not the ſpirit of the Mantuan bard:
Tho' rival ardour his ambition fir'd,
And kindred talents his bold verſe inſpir'd.
  More richly warm, the glowing Titian knew*
To blend with Nature's truth the living hue:
O! had ſublime deſign his colours crown'd!
Then had the world a finiſh'd painter found:
With powers to ſeize the higheſt branch of art,
He fix'd too fondly on an humbler part;
Yet this low object of his partial care
Grew from his toil ſo exquiſitely fair,
That dazzled judgment, with ſuſpended voice,
Fears to condemn the error of his choice.
Thus pleaſed a flowery valley to explore
Whence never Poet cull'd a wreath before, †
Lucretius choſe the epic crown to loſe
For the bright chaplets of an humbler muſe.

* Ver. 268. See NOTE XVI.

† Unde prius nulli velarunt Tempora Muſæ. Lucretius, Lib. iv. Ver. 5.

Soft as CATULLUS, ſweet CORREGIO play'd *
With all the magic charms of light and ſhade.
Tho' PARMA claim it for her rival ſon, †
The praiſe of ſweeteſt grace thy pencil won :
Unhappy genius! tho' of ſkill divine,
Unjuſt neglect, and penury were thine.
Lamenting o'er thy labours unrepaid,
Afflicted Art oppreſt with wrongs decay'd,
Till with pure judgment the CARACCI came, ‡
And raiſing her weak powers and ſinking frame,
Reclaim'd the pencil of miſguided youth,
From Affectation's glare to tints of modeſt Truth.
They form'd the Pencil, to whoſe infant fame
Young ZAMPIERI ow'd his nobler name : §
Profoundly ſkill'd his figures to diſpoſe,
The learned LANFRANC in their ſchool aroſe, ||
And, trained to glory, by their forming care,
The tender GUIDO caught his graceful air. ¶

* Ver. 282. See NOTE XVII.
† Ver. 284. See NOTE XVIII.
‡ Ver. 290. See NOTE XIX.
§ Ver. 295. See NOTE XX.
|| Ver. 297. See NOTE XXI.
¶ Ver. 299. See NOTE XXII.

Nor ſhall ye fail your well-earn'd praiſe to gain,
Ye! who adorn'd with art your native SPAIN!
The unfrequented ſhore, that gave you birth,
Tempts not the faithful Muſe to hide your worth:
Juſt to all regions, let her voice proclaim
TITIAN's mute ſcholar, rival of his fame.*
The power, that Nature to his lips denied,
Indulgent Art, with fonder care, ſupplied:
The cruel bar his happy genius broke;
Tho' dumb the painter, all his pictures ſpoke.
And thou, VELASQUEZ, ſhare the honour due†
To forceful tints, that faſcinate the view!
Thy bold illuſive talents ſoar'd ſo high,
They mock'd, with mimic life, the cheated eye.
Thou liberal artiſt! 'twas thy praiſe to guide
Thy happy ſcholar with parental pride;
Thy care the ſoft, the rich MURILLO form'd,‡
And as thy precept taught, thy friendſhip warm'd.

* Ver. 305. See NOTE XXIII.
† Ver. 310. See NOTE XXIV.
‡ Ver. 316. See NOTE XXV.

Yet other names, and not a ſcanty band!
Have added luſtre to th' IBERIAN land;
But, generous ITALY, thy genial earth
Superior numbers bore of ſplendid worth!
And rais'd amidſt them, in thy golden days,
No mean hiſtorian to record their praiſe. *
  On Thee, whom Art, thy patroneſs and pride,
Taught both the pencil and the pen to guide;
Whoſe generous zeal and modeſt truth have known
To blazon others' ſkill, not boaſt thy own;
On thee, VASARI, let my verſe beſtow
That juſt applauſe, ſo freely ſeen to flow
From thy ingenuous heart and liberal hand,
To each great artiſt of thy native land!
Tho' many ſhine in thy elaborate page,
And more have riſen ſince thy diſtant age,
Their various talents, and their different fame,
The Muſe, unſkilful, muſt decline to name,
Leaſt in the nice attempt her judgment fail,
To poiſe their merits in Preciſion's ſcale.

* Ver. 323. See NOTE XXVI.

E'en

E'en public Taſte, by no determin'd rule,
Has claſs'd the merit of each nobler ſchool:
To ROME and FLORENCE, in Expreſſion ſtrong,
The higheſt honours of Deſign belong;
On her pure Style ſee mild BOLOGNA claim*
Her faireſt right to ſecondary fame;
Tho' prouder VENICE would uſurp that praiſe,
Upon the ſplendid force of TITIAN's golden rays. †
But ill they know the value of their art,
Who, flattering the eye, neglect the heart.
Tho' matchleſs tints a laſting name ſecure,
Tho' ſtrong the magic of the clear-obſcure,
Theſe muſt ſubmit, as a dependant part,
To pure Deſign, the very ſoul of Art;
Or Fame, miſguided, muſt invert her courſe,
And RAPHAEL's Grace muſt yield to REMBRANDT's Force; ‡
Fancy's bold thought to Labour's patient touch,
And Rome's exalted genius to the Dutch.

* Ver. 342. See NOTE XXVII.
† Ver. 345. See NOTE XXVIII.
‡ Ver. 353. See NOTE XXIX.

Yet,

Yet, Holland, thy unwearied labours raiſe *
A perfect title to peculiar praiſe:
Thy hum'rous pencil ſhuns the epic field,
The blazing falchion, and the ſanguine ſhield;
But happily marks the group of rural Mirth,
In ſocial circle round the chearful hearth,
And ruſtic Joy, from buſy cares releas'd,
To the gay gambols of the village feaſt:
While Nature ſmiles her very faults to view,
Trac'd with a ſkill ſo exquiſitely true.
Theſe faults, O Rembrandt, 'twas thy praiſe to hide!
New pow'rs of Art thy fertile mind ſupplied;
With dazzling force thy gorgeous colouring glows,
And o'er each ſcene an air of grandeur throws:
The meaneſt Figures dignity aſſume,
From thy contraſted light, and magic gloom.
Theſe ſtrong illuſions are ſupremely thine,
And laugh at Imitation's vague deſign:
So near to blemiſhes thy beauties run,
Thoſe who affect thy ſplendor are undone:

* Ver. 356. See NOTE XXX.

While

While thy rash rivals, loose and incorrect,
Miscall their shadowy want of truth *Effect*,
And into paths of affectation start:
Neglect of Nature is the bane of Art.
Proud of the praise by RUBENS' pencil won, *
Let FLANDERS boast her bold inventive son!
Whose glowing hues magnificently shine
With warmth congenial to his rich design:
And him, her second pride, whose milder care,
From living Beauty caught its loveliest air!
Who truth of character with grace combin'd,
And in the speaking feature mark'd the mind,
Her soft VANDYKE, while graceful portraits please, †
Shall reign the model of unrivall'd ease.
Painting shall tell, with many a grateful thought,
From FLANDERS first the secret pow'r she caught, ‡
To grace and guard the offspring of her toil,
With all the virtues of enduring oil;

* Ver. 380. See NOTE XXXI.
† Ver. 388. See NOTE XXXII.
‡ Ver. 391. See NOTE XXXIII.

Tho' charm'd by ITALY's alluring views,
(Where ſumptuous LEO courted every Muſe, *
And lovely Science grew the public care)
She fixt the glories of her empire there;
There in her zénith ſoon ſhe ceas'd to ſhine,
And dated, paſſing her meridian line,
From the CARACCI's death her period of decline.
Yet in her gloomy and diſgraceful hour
Of faded beauty, and enfeebled power,
With talents flowing in free Nature's courſe,
With juſt exertion of unborrow'd force,
Untrodden paths of art SALVATOR tried, †
And daring Fancy was his favourite guide.
O'er his wild rocks, at her command, he throws
A ſavage grandeur, and ſublime repoſe;
Or gives th' hiſtoric ſcene a charm as ſtrong
As the terrific gloom of DANTE's ſong.
His bold ideas, unrefin'd by taſte,
Expreſs'd with vigour, tho' conceiv'd in haſte,

* Ver. 395. See NOTE XXXIV.

† Ver. 405. See NOTE XXXV.

Before

Before ſlow judgment their defects can find,
With awful pleaſure fill the paſſive mind.
Nor could one art, with various beauty fraught,
Engroſs the ardor of his active thought:
His pencil pauſing, with ſatiric fire
He ſtruck the chords of the congenial lyre;
By generous verſe attempting to reclaim
The meaner artiſt from each abject aim.
But vain his ſatire! his example vain!
Degraded Painting ſinks, with many a ſtain:
Her clouded beams, from ITALY withdrawn,
On colder FRANCE with tranſient luſtre dawn.
There, in the arms of ROMAN Science nurs'd,
In every work of ancient genius vers'd,
The ſage POUSSIN, with pureſt fancy fraught,*
Portray'd the claſſic ſcene, as Learning taught:
But Nature, jealous of her ſacred right,
And piqu'd that his idolatry ſhould ſlight
Her glowing graces, and her living air,
To worſhip marble with a fonder care,

* Ver. 427. See NOTE XXXVI.

Denied his pencil, in its mimic ſtriſe,
The bloom of beauty, and the warmth of life.
  Then roſe LE BRUN, his ſcholar, and his friend,*
More juſtly ſkill'd the vivid tints to blend;
Tho' with exalted ſpirit he preſent
The generous victor in the ſuppliant tent,
Too oft the genius of his gaudy clime
Miſled his pencil from the pure ſublime.
  Thy dawn, LE SUEUR, announc'd a happier taſte, †
With fancy glowing, and with judgment chaſte:
But Art, who gloried in thy riſing bloom,
Shed fruitleſs tears upon thy early tomb.
  Theſe lights withdrawn, Confuſion and Miſrule
Seize the vain pencil of the Gallic ſchool:
Tho' FRESNOY teaches, in Horatian ſong, ‡
The laws and limits that to Art belong;
In vain he ſtrives, with Attic judgment chaſte,
To cruſh the monſters of corrupted taſte:

* Ver. 435. See NOTE XXXVII.
† Ver. 441. See NOTE XXXVIII.
‡ Ver. 447. See NOTE XXXIX.

With ineffectual fire the poet ſings,
Prolific ſtill the wounded Hydra ſprings:
Gods roll'd on gods encumber every hall,
And ſaints, convulſive, o'er the chapel ſprawl.
Bombaſt is Grandeur, Affectation Grace,
Beauty's ſoft ſmile is turn'd to pert grimace;
Loaded with dreſs, ſupremely fine advance
Old HOMER's heroes, with the airs of FRANCE.
Indignant Art diſclaim'd the motley crew,
Reſign'd their empire, and to BRITAIN flew.

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE.

EPISTLE

THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT

OF THE SECOND EPISTLE.

The rise of Painting in England, and the reasons for its happening so late—The rapidity of its improvement—A slight sketch of the most eminent living Artists in England. The author's wish to see his friend among the first of that number—His reasons for hoping it. The reputation of a Painter in some degree owing to a happy choice of subjects—A few recommended from national events—and from Milton and Shakespeare — Conclusion — Author's wishes for his friend's success.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE II.

INGENUOUS ROMNEY, whom thy merits raiſe
To the pure ſummits of unclouded praiſe;
Whom Art has choſen, with ſucceſsful hand,
To ſpread her empire o'er this honour'd land;
Thy Progreſs Friendſhip with delight ſurveys,
And this pure Homage to thy Goddeſs pays.
Hail! heavenly Viſitant! whoſe cheering powers
E'en to the happy give ſtill happier Hours!
O! next to Freedom, and the Muſe, deſign'd
To raiſe, ennoble, and adorn mankind!
At length we view thee in this favor'd Iſle,
That greets thy Preſence, and deſerves thy Smile:
This favor'd Iſle, in native Freedom bold,
And rich in Spirit as thy Greeks of old.
Tho' foreign Theoriſts, with Syſtem blind,*
Preſcribe falſe limits to the Britiſh mind,

* Ver. 15. See NOTE XL.

And, warp'd by Vanity, presume to hold,
Our northern Genius dark, confin'd, and cold:
Painting, sweet Nymph, unconscious of their chain,
In this fair Island forms her new Domain,
And freely gives to BRITAIN's eager view
Those charms which once her fav'rite ATHENS knew.
'Tis true, when Painting, on ITALIA's shore,
Display'd those Graces, which all Realms adore,
No kindred forms of English growth appear;
Age after age the hapless Pencil here
Dropt unsuccessful from the Native's hand,
And fail'd to decorate this darker Land.
But freely let impartial History say,
Why Art on BRITAIN shone with later ray.
When on this Isle, the Gothic clouds withdrawn,
The distant light of Painting seem'd to dawn,
Fierce HARRY reign'd, who, soon with pleasure cloy'd, *
Now lov'd, now scorn'd, now worship'd, now destroy'd.
Thee as his Wives, enchanting Art! he priz'd,
Now sought to crown thee, now thy death devis'd:

* Ver. 33. See NOTE XLI.

Now

Now ſtrove to fix, with liberal ſupport,
Thy darling RAPHAEL in his ſumptuous Court;
Now o'er the hallow'd ſhrines, thy hand had grac'd,
" Cried havock, and let ſlip the Dogs of Waſte."
When timid Art ſaw ruin his delight,
She fled in terror from the Tyrant's ſight.

The Virgin Queen, whom dazzled eyes admire,
The ſubtle Child of this imperious Sire,
Untaught the moral force of Art to feel, *
Proſcrib'd it as the ſlave of bigot Zeal,
Or doom'd it, throwing nobler works aſide,
To drudge in flatt'ring her fantaſtic Pride:
And hence the Epic pencil in the ſhade
Of blank neglect, and cold obſtruction laid,
E'en while the Fairy-ſprite, and Muſe of fire,
Hung high in Glory's hall the Engliſh lyre.

JAMES, both for Empire and for Arts unfit,
(His ſenſe a quibble, and a pun his wit)
Whatever works he patroniz'd debas'd,
But haply left the Pencil undiſgrac'd.

* Ver. 45. See NOTE XLII.

With fairer mind arose his nobler Son,
Seduc'd by Parasites, by Priests undone:
Unhappy CHARLES! oh! had thy feeling heart
But honour'd Freedom as it valued Art!
To merit just, thy bounty flow'd alike
On bolder RUBENS, and the soft VANDYKE:
To this ennobled realm thy judgment brought
The sacred miracles that RAPHAEL wrought.
But regal Pride, with vain Ambition blind,
Cut off the promise of thy cultur'd mind.
By wounded Liberty's convulsive hand
Unbound, fierce Anarchy usurps the Land;
While trembling Art to foreign regions flies,
To seek a refuge in serener skies.

These storms subsiding, see her once again,
Returning in the second CHARLES's train!
She comes to copy, in licentious sport,
The Minions of a loose luxurious Court;
From whence the modest Graces turn their eyes,
Where Genius sees, and o'er the prospect sighs,
LELY's soft tints, and DRYDEN's nobler Lyre,
Made the mean Slaves of dissolute Desire.

Once

Once more, alarm'd by War's terrific roar,
The ſweet Enchantreſs quits the troubled ſhore;
While ſacred Freedom, darting in diſdain
Her vengeful Thunder on th' apoſtate Train,
And, pleas'd the gloomy Tyrant to diſown,
Gives to NASSAU the abdicated Throne.

The peaceful Prince may riſing Art defend,
And Art ſhall crown her Patron and her Friend.
In tumults, from the cradle to the grave,
'Tis thine, O! WILLIAM, ſinking realms to ſave.
To thee no leiſure mightier cares allow,
To bind the laurel on the Artiſt's brow:
'Tis thine to fix, with tutelary hand,
The Baſe of Freedom, on which Art muſt ſtand.
Yet to thy Palace KNELLER's ſkill ſupplied *
Its richeſt ornament in Beauty's pride.
Unhappy KNELLER! covetous though vain;
Thee Glory yielded to ſeducing Gain:
While partial Taſte from modeſt RILEY turn'd, †
By diffidence depriv'd of praiſe well earn'd.

* Ver. 93. See NOTE XLIII.

† Ver. 97. See NOTE XLIV.

Tho' in ſucceeding years the Muſes taught,
" How ANN commanded, and how MARLBRO' fought;"
And THORNHILL's blaze of Allegory gilt*
The piles, that WREN's ſuperior genius built;
Contending Factions, in her cloſing reign,
Like winds impriſon'd, ſhook fair Freedom's Fane.
Painting, ſoft timid Nymph, ſtill choſe to roam,
And fear'd to ſettle in this ſhaking Dome.
At length, the fury of each ſtorm o'erblown,
That threaten'd BRUNSWICK's race on BRITAIN's throne,
Rebellion vanquiſh'd on her native ſhore,
Her clans extinguiſh'd, and her chiefs no more:
The youthful Noble, on a princely Plan, †
Encourag'd infant Art, and firſt began
Before the ſtudious eye of Youth to place
The ancient Models of ideal Grace.
When BRITAIN triumph'd, thro' her wide domain,
O'er France, ſupported by imperious SPAIN,
And, ſated with her Laurels' large increaſe,
Began to cultivate the plants of Peace;

* Ver. 101. See NOTE XLV.

† Ver. 111. See NOTE XLVI.

Fixt by kind Majeſty's protecting hand,
Painting, no more an alien in our land,
Firſt ſmil'd to ſee, on this propitious ground,
Her Temples open'd, and her altars crown'd:
And Grace, the firſt attendant of her train,
She, whom APELLES wooed, nor wooed in vain,
To REYNOLDS gives her undulating line,
And Judgment doats upon his chaſte deſign.
Tho' Envy whiſpers in the ear of Spleen,
What thoughts are borrow'd in his perfect ſcene,
With glee ſhe marks them on her canker'd ſcroll,
Malicious Fiend! 'twas thus that VIRGIL ſtole,
To the bright Image gave a brighter Gloſs,
Or turn'd to pureſt Gold the foreign Droſs.
Excelling Artiſt! long delight the eye!
Teach but thy tranſient tints no more to fly, *
BRITAIN ſhall then her own APELLES ſee,
And all the Grecian ſhall revive in thee.
Thy manly ſpirit glories to impart
The leading Principles of lib'ral Art; †

* Ver. 134. See NOTE XLVII.
† Ver. 138. See NOTE XLVIII.

To youthful Genius points what courſe to run,
What Lights to follow, and what Rocks to ſhun:
So ORPHEUS taught, by Learning's heavenly ſway,
To daring Argonauts their doubtful way,
And mark'd, to guide them in their bold Career,
Th' unerring Glories of the ſtarry Sphere.
Thy Hand enforces what thy Precept taught,
And gives new leſſons of exalted thought;
Thy nervous Pencil on the canvaſs throws
The tragic ſtory of ſublimeſt woes:
The wretched Sons, whom Grief and Famine tear,
The Parent petrified with blank Deſpair,
Thy UGOLINO gives the heart to thrill, *
With Pity's tender throbs, and Horror's icy chill.
  The offspring now of many a rival hand,
Sublimity and Grace adorn the Land;
Tho' but ſome few years paſt, this barren coaſt
Scarce one fair grain of native Art could boaſt.
Of various form, where'er we turn our eyes,
With ſtrong and rapid growth new wonders riſe,

* Ver. 151. See NOTE XLIX.

Like ſeeds that Mariners, with generous toil,
Have wiſely carried to ſome kindred ſoil,
Which, ſhooting quick and vig'rous in their birth,
Speak the fond bounty of the virgin Earth:
The Land o'erjoy'd a fairer fruit to ſee
Adopts, with glad ſurprize, the alien Tree.
  Now Art exults, with annual Triumphs gay, *
And Britain glories in her rich diſplay;
Merit, who unaſſiſted, and unknown,
Late o'er his unſeen labours ſigh'd alone,
Sees honour now his happier toils attend,
And in the generous Public finds a friend.
  O lovely Painting, to whoſe charms I bow,
" And breathe my willing verſe with ſuppliant vow,"
Forgive me, if by undiſcerning Praiſe,
Or groundleſs Cenſure, which falſe Judgment ſways,
My failing line with faint reſemblance wrong
Thy Sons, the ſubject of no envious ſong!
  Supremely ſkill'd the varied group to place,
And range the crowded ſcene with eaſy grace;

* Ver. 165. See NOTE L.

To finiſh parts, yet not impair the whole,
But on th' impaſſion'd action fix the ſoul;
Thro' wandering throngs the patriot Chief to guide,
The ſhame of CARTHAGE, as of ROME the pride;
Or, while the bleeding Victor yields his breath,
Give the bright leſſon of heroic Death.
Such are thy Merits, WEST: by Virtue's hand
Built on the human heart thy praiſe ſhall ſtand,
While dear to Glory, in her guardian Fane,
The names of REGULUS and WOLFE remain.

With kindred power a rival hand ſucceeds,
For whoſe juſt fame expiring CHATHAM pleads;
Like CHATHAM's language, luminous and bold,
Thy colours, COPLEY, the dread ſcene unfold,
Where that prime Spirit, by whoſe guidance hurl'd,
BRITAIN's avenging thunder aw'd the world,
In patriot cares employ'd his parting breath,
Struck in his field of civic fame by Death;
And Freedom, happy in the tribute paid
By Art and Genius to ſo dear a Shade,
Shall own, the meaſure of thy praiſe to fill,
The aweful ſubject equall'd by thy ſkill.

To Dance's pencil, in Preciſion ſtrong,
Tranſcendent Force, and Truth of Line belong.
Not Garrick's ſelf, to Shakespeare's ſpirit true,
Diſplay'd that ſpirit clearer to our view,
Than Dance expreſſes, in its fierceſt flame,
The Poet's Genius in the Actor's Frame.
From Garrick's features, with diſtraction fraught,
He copies every trace of troubled thought;
And paints, while back the waves of Battle roll,
The Storm of ſanguinary Richard's ſoul.
The rapid Mortimer, of Spirit wild,
Imagination's dear and daring Child,
Marks the fierce Ruffian, in the Dungeon's gloom,
Stung with remorſe, and ſhudd'ring at his doom.
Yet ſtill to nobler heights his Genius ſprings,
And paints a leſſon to tyrannic Kings:
In his bright colours ſee the field appear
To Freedom ſacred, and to Glory dear,
Where John, proud Monarch, baffled on his throne,
Hears the brave Chief his lawleſs pow'r diſown,
And, for an injur'd Nation, nobly claim
The glorious Charter of immortal Fame!

But

But see far off the modest WRIGHT retire!
Alone he rules his Element of Fire:
Like Meteors darting through the gloom of Night,
His sparkles flash upon the dazzled sight;
Our eyes with momentary anguish smart,
And Nature trembles at the power of Art.
May thy bold colours, claiming endless praise,
For ages shine with undiminish'd blaze,
And when the fierce VESUVIO burns no more,
May his red deluge down thy canvass pour!

Art with no common gifts her GAINSB'ROUGH grac'd,
Two different Pencils in his hand she plac'd;
This shall command, she said, with certain aim,
A perfect Semblance of the human Frame;
This, lightly sporting on the village-green,
Paint the wild beauties of the rural Scene.

In Storms sublime the daring WILSON soars,
And on the blasted Oak his mimic Lightning pours:
APOLLO triumphs in his flaming skies,
And classic Beauties in his scenes arise.

Thy Graces, HUMPHREYS, and thy Colours clear,
From Miniature's small circle disappear:

May their diſtinguiſh'd Merit ſtill prevail,
And ſhine with luſtre on the larger Scale.
. Let candid Juſtice our attention lead,
To the ſoft Crayon of the graceful READ:
Nor, GARD'NER, ſhall the Muſe, in haſte, forget
Thy Taſte and Eaſe; tho' with a fond Regret
She pays, while here the Crayon's pow'r ſhe notes,
A Sigh of Homage to the Shade of COATES.
Nor, if her favour'd hand may hope to ſhed
The flowers of glory o'er the ſkillful dead,
Thy Talents, HOGARTH! will ſhe leave unſung; *
Charm of all eyes, and Theme of every tongue!
A ſeparate province 'twas thy praiſe to rule;
Self-form'd thy Pencil! yet thy works a School,
Where ſtrongly painted, in gradations nice,
The Pomp of Folly, and the Shame of Vice,
Reach'd thro' the laughing Eye the mended Mind,
And moral Humour ſportive Art refin'd.
While fleeting Manners, as minutely ſhewn
As the clear proſpect on the mirror thrown;

* Ver. 255. See NOTE LI.

While Truth of Character, exactly hit,
And dreſt in all the dyes of comic wit;
While theſe, in FIELDING's page, delight ſupply,
So long thy Pencil with his Pen ſhall vie.
Science with grief beheld thy drooping age
Fall the ſad victim of a Poet's rage:
But Wit's vindictive ſpleen, that mocks controul,
Nature's high tax on luxury of ſoul!
This, both in Bards and Painters, Fame forgives;
Their Frailty's buried, but their Genius lives.

Still many a Painter, not of humble Name,
Appears the tribute of applauſe to claim;
Some alien Artiſts, more of Engliſh Race,
With fair ANGELICA our foreign Grace,
Who paints, with Energy and Softneſs join'd,
The fond Emotions of the female Mind;
And CIPRIANI, whom the Loves ſurround,
And ſportive Nymphs in Beauty's Ceſtus bound:
For him thoſe Nymphs their every Charm diſplay,
For him coy VENUS throws her veil away;
And ZAFFANI, whoſe faithful colours give
The tranſient glories of the Stage to live;

On his bright canvaſs each dramatic Muſe
A perfect copy of her ſcene reviews ;
Each, while thoſe ſcenes her loſt delight reſtore,
Almoſt forgets her Garrick is no more.---
O'er theſe I paſs reluctant, leaſt too long
The Muſe diffuſely ſpin a tedious Song.
  Yet one ſhort pauſe, ye Pow'rs of Verſe, allow
To cull a Myrtle Leaf for MEYERS's Brow !
Tho' ſmall its Field, thy Pencil may preſume
To aſk a Wreath where Flowers immortal bloom.
As Nature's ſelf, in all her pictures fair,
Colours her Inſect works with niceſt care,
Nor better forms, to pleaſe the curious eye,
The ſpotted Leopard than the gilded Fly ;
So thy fine Pencil, in its narrow ſpace,
Pours the full portion of uninjur'd Grace,
And Portraits, true to Nature's larger line,
Boaſt not an Air more exquiſite than thine.
Soft Beauty's charms thy happieſt works expreſs,
Beauty thy model and thy Patroneſs.
For her thy care has to perfection brought
Th' uncertain toil, with anxious trouble fraught ;

Thy colour'd Chryſtal, at her fond deſire,
Draws deathleſs Luſtre from the dang'rous Fire,
And, pleas'd to gaze on its immortal charm,
She binds thy Bracelet on her ſnowy arm.
 While Admiration views, with raptur'd eye,
Theſe Lights of Art that gild the Britiſh ſky;
Oh! may my Friend ariſe, with luſtre clear,
And add new Glory to this radiant Sphere.
This wiſh, my Romney, from the pureſt ſource,
Has Reaſon's Warrant, join'd to Friendſhip's Force.
For Genius breath'd into thy infant Frame
The vital Spirit of his ſacred Flame,
Which frequent miſts of Diffidence o'ercloud,
Proving the vigor of the Sun they ſhroud.
Nature in thee her every gift combin'd,
Which forms the Artiſt of the nobleſt kind;
That fond Ambition, which beſtows on Art
Each talent of the Mind, and paſſion of the Heart;
That dauntleſs Patience, which all toil defies,
Nor feels the labour while it views the prize.
Enlight'ning Study, with maturing pow'r,
From theſe fair ſeeds has call'd the op'ning flow'r;

Thy

Thy juſt, thy graceful Portraits charm the view,
With every tender tint that TITIAN knew.
Round Fancy's circle when thy Pencil flies,
With what terrific pomp thy Spectres riſe!
What luſt of miſchief marks thy Witch's form,
While on the LAPLAND Rock ſhe ſwells the ſtorm!
Tho' led by Fancy thro' her boundleſs reign,
Well doſt thou know to quit her wild domain,
When Hiſtory bids thee paint, ſeverely chaſte,
Her ſimpler ſcene, with uncorrupted taſte.
While in theſe fields thy judging eyes explore,
What ſpot untried may yield its ſecret ore,
Thy happy Genius ſprings a virgin Mine
Of copious, pure, original Deſign;
Truth gives it value, and, diſtinctly bold,
The ſtamp of Character compleats thy Gold.
Thy Figures riſe in Beauty's nobleſt ſcale,
Sublimely telling their heroic Tale.
Still may thy Powers in full exertion blaze,
And Time revere them with unrivall'd praiſe!
May Art, in honour of a Son like thee,
So juſtly daring, with a ſoul ſo free,

Each ſeparate Province to thy care commend,
And all her Glories in thy Pencil blend!
May tender TITIAN's mellow Softneſs join,
With mighty ANGELO's ſublimer Line;
CORREGIO's Grace with RAPHAEL's Taſte unite,
And in thy perfect Works inchant the raviſh'd Sight!
  How oft we find that when, with nobleſt aim,
The glowing Artiſt gains the heights of Fame,
To the well-choſen Theme he chiefly owes,
That praiſe which Judgment with delight beſtows.
The Lyre and Pencil both this Truth confeſs,
The happy Subject forms their full ſucceſs.
  Hard is the Painter's fate, when, wiſely taught
To trace with eaſe the deepeſt lines of thought,
By hapleſs Fortune he is doom'd to rove
Thro' all the frolicks of licentious JOVE,
That ſome dark PHILIP, phlegmatic, and cold,*
(Whoſe needy TITIAN calls for ill-paid gold)
May with voluptuous Images enflame
The ſated Paſſions of his languid frame.

* Ver. 369. See NOTE LII.

Abuſe like this awakens generous Pain,
And juſt Deriſion mingles with Diſdain,
When ſuch a Pencil, in a Roman hand,
While the rich Abbeſs iſſues her command,
Makes wild St. FRANCIS on the canvaſs ſprawl,
That ſome warm Nun in mimic Trance may fall,
Or, fondly gazing on the pious whim,
Feel ſaintly Love o'erload each lazy limb,
Miſtaking, in the Cloiſter's dull embrace,
The Cry of Nature for the Call of Grace.

But ſee th' hiſtoric Muſe before thee ſtand,
Her nobler ſubjects court thy happier Hand!
Her Forms of reverend Age, of graceful Youth,
Of public Virtue, and of private Truth:
The ſacred power of injur'd Beauty's charms,
And Freedom, fierce in adamantine Arms;
Whence Sympathy, thro' thy aſſiſting art,
With floods of Joy may fill the human heart.

But while the bounds of Hiſt'ry you explore,
And bring new Treaſures from her fartheſt ſhore,
Thro' all her various fields, tho' large and wide,
Still make Simplicity thy conſtant guide:

And most, my Friend, a Syren's wiles beware,
Ah! shun insidious Allegory's snare!
Her Flattery offers an alluring wreath,
Fair to the eye, but poisons lurk beneath,
By which, too lightly tempted from his guard,
Full many a Painter dies, and many a Bard.
How sweet her voice, how dang'rous her spell,
Let SPENSER's Knights, and RUBENS' Tritons tell;
Judgment at colour'd riddles shakes his head,
And fairy Songs are prais'd, but little read;
Where, in the Maze of her unbounded Sphere,
Unbridled Fancy runs her wild Career.
  In Realms where Superstition's tyrant sway
"Takes half the vigor of the soul away,"
Let Art for subjects the dark Legend search,
Where Saints unnumber'd people every Church;
Let Painters run the wilds of OVID o'er,
To hunt for monsters which we heed no more.
But here, my ROMNEY, where, on Freedom's wings,
The towering Spirit to Perfection springs;
Where Genius, proud to act as Heav'n inspires,
On Taste's pure Altars lights his sacred fires;

Oh! here let Painting, as of old in Greece,
With patriot paſſions warm the finiſh'd piece;
Let Britain, happy in a gen'rous race,
Of manly Spirit, and of female Grace,
Let this frank Parent with fond eyes explore,
Some juſt memorials of the line ſhe bore,
In tints immortal to her view recall
Her deareſt Offspring on the ſtoried Wall.
 But ſome there are, who, with pedantic ſcorn,
Deſpiſe the Hero, if in Britain born:
For them Perfection has herſelf no charms,
Without a Roman robe, or Grecian arms:
Our ſlighted Country, for whoſe Fame they feel
No generous Intereſt, no manly Zeal,
Sees public Judgment their falſe Taſte arraign,
And treat their cold contempt with due diſdain;
To the fair Annals of our Iſle we truſt,
To prove this patriot indignation juſt,
And, nobly partial to our native earth,
Bid Engliſh Pencils honour Engliſh Worth.*
 Shall Bayard, glorious in his dying hour,
Of Gallic Chivalry the faireſt Flow'r,

* Ver. 436. See NOTE LIII.

Shall his pure Blood in Britiſh colours flow,
And BRITAIN, on her canvaſs, fail to ſhew
Her wounded SIDNEY, BAYARD's perfect peer, *
SIDNEY, her Knight, without Reproach or Fear,
O'er whoſe pale corſe heroic Worth ſhould bend,
And mild Humanity embalm her Friend!
Oh! ROMNEY, in his hour of Death we find
A Subject worthy of thy feeling Mind;
Methinks I ſee thy rapid Hand diſplay
The field of ZUTPHEN, on that fatal day,
When arm'd for freedom, 'gainſt the guilt of SPAIN,
The Hero bled upon the Belgic plain!
In that great moment thou haſt caught the Chief,
When pitying Friends ſupply the wiſh'd relief,
While Sickneſs, Pain, and Thirſt his pow'r ſubdue,
I ſee the draught he pants for in his view:
Near him the Soldier that expiring lies,
This precious Water views with ghaſtly eyes,
With eyes that from their ſockets ſeem to burſt,
With eager, frantic, agonizing Thirſt:

* Ver. 441. See NOTE LIV.

I ſee

I ſee the Hero give, oh ! generous Care !
The Cup untaſted to this ſilent Pray'r ;
I hear him ſay, with Tenderneſs divine,
" Thy ſtrong Neceſſity ſurpaſſes mine."
Shall Roman Charity for ever ſhare
Thro' every various School each Painter's Care ?
And BRITAIN ſtill her bright examples hide
Of female Glory, and of filial Pride ?
Inſtruct our eyes, my ROMNEY, to adore
Th' heroic Daughter of the virtuous MORE,*
Reſolv'd to ſave, or in th' attempt expire,
The precious relicks of her martyr'd Sire :
Before the cruel Council let her ſtand,
Preſs the dear ghaſtly Head with pitying Hand,
And plead, while Bigotry itſelf grows mild,
The ſacred duties of a grateful Child.
Forgive the Muſe, if haply ſhe commend
A Theme ill-choſen to her ſkilful Friend ;
She, tho' its pow'r commands her willing heart,
Knows not the limits of thy lovely Art,

* Ver. 468. See NOTE LV.

Yet boldly owns an eager wiſh to ſee
Her darling Images adorn'd by thee.
Nor ſhall her ſocial Love in ſilence hide
The juſt emotions of her grateful Pride,
When thy quick Pencil pours upon her ſight
Her own Creation in a fairer light;
When her SERENA learns from thee to live,
And pleaſe by every charm that life can give.
Thou haſt imparted to th' ideal Fair
Yet more than Beauty's bloom, and Youth's attractive air;
For in thy ſtudious Nymph th' enamour'd Eye
May, thro' her breaſt, her gentle Heart deſcry;
See the fond thoughts, that o'er her Fancy roll,
And Sympathy's ſoft ſwell, that fills her ſoul.
But happier Bards, who boaſt a higher claim,
Aſk from thy Genius an increaſe of Fame.
Oh! let the Siſters, who, with friendly aid,
The Grecian Lyre, and Grecian Pencil ſway'd,
Who join'd their rival Powers with fond delight,
To grace each other with reflected Light,
Let them in BRITAIN thus united reign,
And double luſtre from that union gain!

Not that my Verſe, adventurous, would pretend
To point each varied ſubject to my Friend;
Far nobler guides their better aid ſupply:
When mighty SHAKESPEARE to thy judging eye
Preſents that magic Glaſs, whoſe ample Round
Reflects each Figure in Creation's bound,
And pours, in floods of ſupernatural light,
Fancy's bright Beings on the charmed ſight.
This chief Inchanter of the willing breaſt,
Will teach thee all the magic he poſſeſt.
Plac'd in his Circle, mark in colours true
Each brilliant Being that he calls to view:
Wrapt in the gloomy ſtorm, or rob'd in light,
His weïrd Siſter or his fairy Sprite,
Boldly o'erleaping, in the great deſign,
The bounds of Nature, with a Guide divine.

Let MILTON's ſelf, conductor of thy way,
Lead thy congenial ſpirit to portray
In Colours, like his Verſe, ſublimely ſtrong,
The ſcenes that blaze in his immortal ſong.

See MICHAEL drawn, by many a ſkilful Hand,
As ſuits the Leader of the Seraph-Band!

But oh! how poor the proſtrate SATAN lies,*
With beſtial form debas'd and goatiſh eyes!
How chang'd from him who leads the dire debate,
Fearleſs tho' fallen, and in Ruin great!
Let thy bold Pencil, more ſublimely true,
Preſent his Arch Apoſtate to our view,
In worthier Semblance of infernal Pow'r,
And proudly ſtanding like a ſtately tow'r,
While his infernal mandate bids awake
His Legions, ſlumbering on the burning Lake.
  Or paint him falling from the Realms of Bliſs,
Hurl'd in Combuſtion to the deep Abyſs!
In light terrific let the Flaſh diſplay
His Pride, ſtill proof againſt almighty Sway:
Tho' vanquiſh'd, yet immortal, let his Eye
The Lightning's flame, the Thunder's bolt defy,
And ſtill, with Looks of Execration, dare
To face the Horrors of the laſt Deſpair.
  To theſe great Lords of Fancy's wide domain,
That o'er the human Soul unqueſtion'd reign,

* Ver. 523. See NOTE LVI.

To their ſuperior Guidance be conſign'd
Thy rival Pencil and congenial Mind.
Yet O! let Friendſhip, ere the Verſe ſhe cloſe,
Which in juſt Tribute to thy Merit flows,
The ſanguine wiſhes of her heart expreſs,
With fond preſages of thy full Succeſs.
May Health and Joy, in happieſt union join'd,
Breathe their warm Spirit o'er thy fruitful Mind!
To nobleſt Efforts raiſe thy glowing Heart,
And ſtring thy ſinews to the toils of Art!
May Independance, burſting Faſhion's chain,
To eager Genius give the flowing rein,
And o'er thy epic Canvaſs ſmile to ſee
Thy Judgment active, and thy Fancy free!
May thy juſt Country, while thy bold deſign
Recalls the Heroes of her ancient Line,
Gaze on the martial Group with dear delight!
May Youth and Valour, kindling at the ſight,
O'er the bright Tints with Admiration lean,
And catch new Virtue from the moral Scene!
May Time himſelf a fond Reluctance feel,
Nor from thy aged hand the Pencil ſteal,

But

But grant it ſtill to gain increaſing Praiſe,
In the late Period of thy lengthen'd days,
While faireſt Fortune thy long Life endears,
With Raphael's Glory join'd to Titian's Years!

NOTES

NOTES

TO THE

FIRST EPISTLE.

AS there may possibly be some Readers of the foregoing Performance, who may wish to look into the sources from whence the Author has borrowed some of his ideas, he has thrown together the subsequent Notes, and disjoined them from the body of the Work, as they are intended only for the perusal of those who have leisure and disposition for such kind of reading.

NOTE I. VERSE 77.

MAKE *history to life new value lend.*] One of the most elegant writers of the present age, has made an ingenious effort to introduce History into the dull province of Portrait-painting, "by representing a whole family in a single picture, under some interesting historical subject suitable to their rank and character." See Fitzosborne's Letters, p. 6. But as the beauties and advantages of this plan struck forcibly on the imagination of this amiable Author, the infinite difficulties attending its execution were likewise fully open to his discernment. The success must depend on the choice of subject: where that is not very happily adapted, the picture will probably contain some most ridiculous absurdities—Perhaps the Reader may recollect an unfortunate instance or two of this kind.

NOTE

NOTE II. Verse 100.

Not less absurd to flatter Nero's eyes.] Pliny furnishes us with this singular anecdote, as an instance of the extravagant abuse of Portrait-painting in his days, which, as he informs us, had arrived to a degree of madness. "Nero had ordered himself to be painted under the figure of a Colossus, upon cloth or canvass, a hundred and twenty feet in height." The same author informs us, that this preposterous picture, when it was finished, met with its fate from lightning, which consumed it, and involved likewise the most beautiful part of the gardens where it was placed in the conflagration. The Reader may find some ingenious remarks upon this subject, in the Notes sur l'Histoire de la Peinture ancienne extraite de l'Histoire naturelle de Pline. Fol. London, 1725.

NOTE III. Verse 108.

Blest be the pencil! which from death can save.] The sweet illusion of this enchanting art is prettily expressed in a Letter of Raphael's to his friend Francesco Raifolini, a Bolognese painter. The two artists had agreed to exchange their own portraits, and Raphael, on receiving his friend's picture, addresses him in the following words:

"Messer Francesco mio caro ricevo in questo punto il vostro ritratto - - - - egli è bellissimo, e tanto vivo, che m' inganno talora, credendomi di essere con esso voi, e sentire le vostre parole."

Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, &c. Tom. i. pag. 82.

The charm of Portrait-painting is still more beautifully described in verse by a friend of Raphael's, the amiable and accomplished Count Balthasor Castiglione.

Sola tuos Vultus referens Raphaelis imago
Picta manu, curas allevat usque meas:
Huic ego delicias facio, arrisuque jocoque
Alloquor, et tanquam reddere verba queat

Assensu,

Aſſenſu, nutuque mihi ſæpe illa videtur
Dicere velle aliquid, et tua verba loqui.
Agnoſcit balboque Patrem, puer ore ſalutat.
Hoc ſolor, longos decipioque dies.

Theſe elegant lines are part of an epiſtle, written in the name of hisOunteſs, Hyppolyte, to her huſband. See Pope's edition of the Poemata Italorum, Vol. ii. page 248.

NOTE IV. VERSE 126.

Inſpir'd by thee, the ſoft Corinthian Maid.] Pliny has tranſmitted to us the Hiſtory of the Maid of Corinth and her father. "Dibutades, a potter of Sicyon, firſt formed likeneſſes in clay at Corinth, but was indebted to his daughter for the invention; the girl being in love with a young man who was ſoon going from her into ſome remote country, traced out the lines of his face from his ſhadow upon the wall by candle-light. Her father, filling up the lines with clay, formed a buſt, and hardened it in the fire with the reſt of his earthen ware." Plin. Lib. 35.

Athenagoras, the Athenian philoſopher, gives a ſimilar account of this curious and entertaining anecdote, adding the circumſtance that the youth was ſleeping when the likeneſs was taken from his ſhadow. Περιεγραψεν αὐτȣ κοιμωμενȣ εν τοιχῳ την σκιαν.

The ſame writer, who lived in the ſecond century of the Chriſtian æra, informs us that this monument of ancient art was extant at Corinth in his time, though Pliny ſeems to intimate that it did not ſurvive the taking of that city by Mummius.

In the Poeſies de Fontenelle there is an epiſtle from the Maid of Corinth, whom the author calls Dibutadis, to her imaginary lover Polemon. She deſcribes her own work in the following Stanzas:

Une lampe pretoit une Lumiere ſombre
Qui m' aidoit encore à rever :
Je voyois ſur un mur ſe depeindre ton ombre,
Et m' appliquois à l'obſerver :

Car tout plait, Polemon, pour peu qu'il repreſente
L' objet de notre attachement,
C'eſt aſſez pour flater les langueurs d'une amante
Que l'ombre ſeule d'un amant.

Mais je pouſſai plus loin cette douce chimere,
Je voulus fixer en ces Lieux,
Attacher à ce mur une ombre paſſagere
Pour la conſerver à mes yeux.

Alors en la ſuivant du Bout d'une baguette
Je trace une Image de toi ;
Une image, il eſt vrai, peu diſtincte, imparfaite,
Mais enfin charmante pour moi.

NOTE V. VERSE 194.

'Twas then Panæus drew, with freedom's train.] Panæus was the brother of Phidias, the celebrated Sculptor, whom he is ſaid to have aſſiſted in his nobleſt works. Pauſanias, in his Fifth Book, gives an account of ſeveral pictures by this early Artiſt, and particularly of the picture here alluded to. It was painted in the celebrated portico called Ποικιλη, Pœcile.

Beſides a general repreſentation of the conflict, the flight of the barbarians, and a diſtant view of their ſhips, Theſeus, Minerva, and Hercules were, according to this author, exhibited in the piece. The moſt conſpicuous figures among the perſons engaged were Callimachus, and Miltiades, and a hero called Echetlus: he mentions alſo another

another hero, who is introduced into the picture, called Marathon, from whom, he says, the field had its name.

Pausanias, fol. Lip. 1696. p. 37.

From Pliny's account of the same picture we learn that the heads of the generals were portraits—adeo jam colorum usus percrebuerat, adeoque ars perfecta erat ut in eo Prælio ICONICOS duces pinxisse tradatur.— Plin. Lib. 35. c. 8.

Miltiades had the honour of being placed foremost in this illustrious group, as a reward for his having saved Athens, and all Greece.

Cor. Nep. in Vitâ Miltiadis.

Panæus flourished, according to Pliny, in the 83d Olympiad, little more than forty years after the battle he painted.

NOTE VI. VERSE 198.

There Polygnotus, scorning servile hire.] Of the talents of Polygnotus much honourable mention is made by many of the best authors of antiquity, as Aristotle and Plutarch, Dionysius Halicarnassensis, &c. Pausanias speaks of the pictures here alluded to, and in his Tenth Book, introduces a very long description of other pictures by the same artist, painted also from Homer in the Temple at Delphos. The passage however gives but a confused and imperfect idea of the painter's performance. How much the art is indebted to this ancient master, what grace and softness he gave to the human countenance, what embellishments he added to the female figure and dress, are much more happily described by Pliny. Primus Mulieres lucidâ veste pinxit, capita earum mitris versicoloribus operuit, plurimumque picturæ primus contulit: siquidem instituit os adaperire, dentes ostendere, vultum ab antiquo rigore variare. The same author likewise bears honourable testimony to the liberal spirit of this great artist, who refused any reward for his ingenious labours in the portico.—

tico.—Porticum gratuito, cum partem ejus Mycon mercede pingeret. Plin. Lib. 35. cap. 8.

He flourished about the 90th Olympiad.

NOTE VII. VERSE 202.

Thy tragic pencil, Aristides, caught.] The city of Thebes had the honour of giving birth to this celebrated Artist. He was the first, according to Pliny, who expressed Character and Passion, the Human Mind, and its several emotions; but he was not remarkable for softness of colouring. "His most celebrated picture was of an infant (on the taking of a town) at the mother's breast, who is wounded and expiring. The sensations of the mother were clearly marked, and her fear least the child, upon failure of the milk, should suck her blood." "Alexander the Great," continues the same author, "took this picture with him to Pella."

It is highly probable, according to the conjecture of Junius, (in his learned Treatise de Picturâ Veterum) that the following beautiful epigram of Æmilianus was written on this exquisite picture:

Ελκε, ταλαν, παρα μητρος ὂν ȣκ ετι μαζον αμελξεις
    Ελκυσον ὑϛαλιον ναμα κατα φθιμενης.
Η δη γαρ ξιφεεσσι λιποπνοος· αλλα τα μητρος
    Φιλτρα καὶ εἰν αϊδη παιδοκομειν εμαθον.

It is not ill translated into Latin by Grotius:

Suge, miser, nunquam quæ posthac pocula suges;
    Ultima ab exanimo corpore poc'la trahe!
Expiravit enim jam saucia; sed vel ab orco
    Infantem novit pascere matris amor.

But

But this is far inferior, and ſo perhaps is the original itſelf, to the very elegant Engliſh verſion of it, which Mr. Webb has given us in his ingenious and animated "Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting."

Suck, little wretch, while yet thy mother lives,
Suck the laſt drop her fainting boſom gives!
She dies: her tenderneſs ſurvives her breath,
And her fond love is provident in death.

Webb, Dialogue 7. p. 161.

NOTE VIII. VERSE 206.

Correct Parrhaſius firſt to rich deſign.] The name of Parrhaſius is immortalized by many of the moſt celebrated ancient authors; and his peculiar talents are thus recorded in Pliny: Primus ſymmetriam picturæ dedit, primus argutias vultus, elegantiam capilli, venuſtatem oris: confeſſione artificum in lineis extremis palmam adeptus.—He is one of the four ancient painters, whoſe lives are written by Carlo Dati. —This ingenious Italian very juſtly queſtions the truth of the ſingular ſtory concerning Parrhaſius, preſerved in Seneca, where he is accuſed of purchaſing an old Olynthian captive, and expoſing him to a moſt wretched death, that he might paint from his agony the tortures of Prometheus. The ſame author contradicts on this occaſion a ſimilar falſehood concerning the great Michael Angelo, which was firſt circulated from the pulpit by an ignorant prieſt, as we learn from Gori's Hiſtorical Annotations to the Life of M. Angelo, by his ſcholar Condivi.

NOTE IX. VERSE 210.

The gay, the warm, licentious Zeuxis drew.] The Helen of Zeuxis is become almoſt proverbial: the Story of the Artiſt's having executed the picture from an aſſemblage of the moſt beautiful females is mentioned (though with ſome variation as to the place) by authors of great credit,

credit, Pliny, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Cicero. The last gives a very long and circumstantial account of it.

De Inventione, Lib. 2.

If the story is true, it is perhaps one of the strongest examples we can find of that enthusiastick passion for the fine arts which animated the ancients. Notwithstanding her præeminence in beauty, it seems somewhat singular that the painter should have chosen, such a character as Helen, as a proper decoration for the Temple of Juno. A most celebrated Spanish Poet, though not in other respects famous for his judgment, has, I think, not injudiciously metamorphosed this Helen of Zeuxis into Juno herself.

Zeusis, Pintor famoso, retratando
De Juno el rostro, las faciones bellas
De cinco perfettissimas donzellas
Estuvo attentamente contemplando.

Rimas de Lope de Vega.

Lisboa, 1605. p. 51-2.

Junius supposes this picture to have been rated a little too high.—

NOTE X. VERSE 216.

Yet oft to gain sublimer heights he strove.] Grace is the well-known excellence of Apelles, but that he sometimes very happily attempted the sublime, we learn both from Plutarch and Pliny, who speak of his force and energy—The Alexander of Philip, says Plutarch, was invincible, the Alexander of Apelles inimitable.

He painted, says Pliny, things that surpass the power of painting, quæ pingi non possunt, Tonitrua, fulgura fulgetraque—

NOTE XI. VERSE 228.

While chilling damps upon the pencil hung.] That the Romans attained to no degree of excellence in Painting, or Sculpture, seems to be confest, and accounted for in the following passage of Tully's Tusculan Disputations, Lib. 1.

An censemus, si Fabio, nobilissimo homini, laudi datum esset quod pingeret, non multos etiam apud nos futuros Polycletos, et Parrhasios fuisse? honos alit artes, omnesque incenduntur ad Studia Gloriâ, jacentque ea semper quæ apud quosque improbantur.

The fine arts necessarily languish without publick protection or encouragement: but publick honours at Rome flowed in a very different channel. While the Roman boasted his consummate skill in every art of empire and government, he avowed, in many works of genius and taste, his inferiority with an air of triumph.

Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,
Credo equidem vivos ducent de marmore vultus;
Orabunt causas melius, cælique meatus
Describent radio, et surgentia Sidera dicent.
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hæ tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem:
Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.

Æneidos, Lib. VI.

NOTE XII. VERSE 244.

There studious Vinci treasur'd every rule.] Lionardo da Vinci was born near Florence in 1445. He was perhaps a man as universally accomplished as ever existed. Not only admirable beyond his Predecessors in his own profession of Painting, but an excellent Architect and Musician, and of great skill as an Anatomist. Besides all these ta-

 lents,

lents, he was, according to Vaſari, the beſt extempore Rimer of his Time.—His Hiſtory and Works are well known.—The ſingular circumſtance of his dying in the arms of Francis the Firſt, king of France, is mentioned by a French poet of the preſent age,

"Lorſque Francois premier, Roi digne d' être heureux,
Tint Leonarad mourant dans ſes bras genereux."

And the particulars of his death are thus curiouſly recorded by Vaſari, who ſpeaks in raptures of his various and exalted talents:

Finalmente venuto vecchio, ſtette molti meſi ammalato, et vedendoſi vicino alla morte, ſi volſe diligentemente informare de le coſe catoliche, & della via buona, et ſanta religione chriſtiana, et poi con molti pianti confeſſo e contrito, ſe bene e' non poteva reggerſi in piedi, ſoſte nendoſi nelle braccie di ſuoi amici, e ſervi, volſe divotamente pigliare il ſantiſſimo ſacramento, fuor del letto: ſopragiunſeli il Rè che ſpeſſo e amerevolmente le ſoleva viſitare: per il che egli per riverenza rizzatoſi a ſedere ſul letto, contando il mal ſuo & gli accidenti di quello moſtrava tuttavia quanto aveva offeſo dio, et gli huomini del mendo, non avendo operato nel arte come ſi conveniva: onde gli venne un paroſiſmo meſſagiero della morte. Per la qual coſa rizzatoſi il Rè, et preſola la teſta per aiutarlo, & porgerli Favore, accio che il male lo allegeriſſe; lo ſpirito ſuo, che diviniſſimo era, conoſcendo non potere havere maggiore honore, ſpirò in braccio à quell rè nella etá ſua d' anni 75.

Vaſari Vita di Lionardo da Vinci, p. 10, 11.

NOTE XIII. Verse 251.

Gigantic Angelo his wonders wrought.] Michael Angelo Buonaroti was born near Florence 1474, and died at Rome 1564.

This illuſtrious man is too well known, both as an Architect and a Painter,

Painter, to need any encomium: he was alſo a Poet. His *Rime* were printed by the Giunto at Florence, in quarto, in 1623. The following Sonnet, which is to be found in Vaſari, to whom it is addreſſed, is at once a proof of his poetical talents, and his religious turn of mind: it may ſerve alſo as a leſſon to vanity, in ſhewing that even a genius of the ſublimeſt claſs entertained great apprehenſion concerning the mortality of his fame.

Giunti è già 'l corſo della vita mia,
Con tempeſtoſo mar per fragil barca,
Al comun porto, ov' à render ſi varca
Conto e ragion d' ogni opra triſta, e pia.

Onde l' affettuoſa fantaſia
Che l' arte mi fece idolo e monarca,
Cognoſco hor ben quant 'era d'error carca
E quel ch' a mal ſuo grado ognun deſia.

Gli amoroſi penſier, gia vani, e lieti
Che fien or' s'a due morti mi avicino?
D'una ſo certo, e l' altra mi minaccia.
Ne pinger ne ſcolpir fia piu che queti
L'anima volta a quello amor divino
Ch' aperſe a prender noi in croce le braccia.

A letter, addreſſed to his friend Vaſari, on the death of Urbino, his old and faithful ſervant, ſhews, that he united the ſoft virtues of a moſt benevolent heart to the ſublime talents of an elevated mind.—This letter is printed both in Vaſari, and in the firſt volume of Raccolta de Lettere ſulla Pittura, &c. p. 6.

NOTE XIV. VERSE 254.

Taste, Fancy, Judgment, all on Raphael smil'd.] Raffaello da Urbino was born in 1483, and died 1520. His amiable qualities as a Man were not inferior to his exalted talents as an Artist. The reader will not be displeased to see the singular eulogium which the honest Vasari has bestowed on the engaging manners of this most celebrated Genius.

Certo fra le sue doti singulari ne scorgo una di tal valore che in me stesso stupisco; che il cielo gli diede forza di poter mostrare nell' arte nostra uno effetto si contrario alle complessioni di noi pittori: questo è che naturalmente gli artefici nostri, non dico soli i bassi, ma quelli che hanno umore d' esser grandi (come di questo umore l'arte ne produce infiniti) lavorando nell' opere in compagnia di Raffaello, stavano uniti e di concordia tale che tutti i mali umori in veder lui s'amorzavano: e ogni vile e basso pensiero cadeva loro di mente. La quale unione mai non fu piu in altro tempo che nel suo. E questo aveniva perche restavano vinti dalla cortesia e dall' arte sua, ma più dal genio della sua buona natura.

Vasari Vita di Raff. p. 88.

To atone for the imperfect sketch, which has been here attempted of these divine artists, (Michael Angelo and Raphael) the author intended to have presented the reader with a long quotation from a most animated discourse of the President of the Royal Academy, in which he has placed these great masters in a light of comparison with each other. But as the discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds are no longer scarce (a new edition being now published) he shall refer the reader to the Work itself. He will find this most happy and ingenious parallel in the discourse delivered at the Royal Academy, December 10, 1772.

NOTE XV. VERSE 260.

The daring Julio, though by Raphael train'd.] Julio Romano was born at Rome 1492, and died at Mantua 1546.

His ſingular character is forcibly drawn by Vaſari. He was, according to this writer, the moſt ſucceſsful imitator of Raphael, the greater part of whoſe ſcholars became eminent, and were almoſt infinite in number. Raphael was particularly attentive to Julio, and loved him with the affection of a parent.

Vaſari Vita di Giulio.

NOTE XVI. VERSE 268.

More richly warm, the glowing Titian knew.] We find frequent cenſures thrown upon Titian by the criticks, for confining himſelf "to flattering the eye by the richneſs and truth of his colouring, without a proper attention to the higher branch of his art, that of intereſting our feeling by affecting ſubjects;" the criticiſm is indeed extended to the Painters of the Lombard School in general.

Du Bos, Tom. I. Sect. 10.

Why Titian choſe not to follow the finiſhed method of his excellent cotemporaries, he declared to Franceſco de Vargas, the embaſſador of Charles the Vth at Venice.

"I fear, (replied this eminent Painter to the queſtion of Vargas, I ſhould never equal the extreme delicacy which diſtinguiſhes the pencils of Corregio, Parmegiano, and Raphael: and even though I ſhould be ſucceſsful enough to equal them, I ſhould always rank below them, becauſe I ſhould be only accounted their imitator. In a word, ambition, which always attends the fine arts, has induced me to chooſe a way entirely new, in which I might make myſelf famed for ſomething, as the great Maſters have done in the route they have followed."

Antoine Perez, dans la ſoixante unieme de ſes Secondes Lettres.

This

This great Artist enjoyed a long life of uninterrupted health, and died during the plague at Venice in 1576, at the uncommon age of ninety-nine.

NOTE XVII. VERSE 282.

Soft as Catullus, sweet Corregio play'd] Antonio da Corregio.—Very different accounts are given by different authors of the birth and fortunes of this exquisite Painter. His capital pictures were executed about the year 1512, according to Vasari; who relates, in a very affecting manner, the circumstances of his poverty and death.

Having taken a journey on foot, in extremely hot weather, he imprudently drank cold water, which brought on a fever, of which he died at about the age of forty.

His colouring was most exquisitely adapted to the delicate softness of female beauty. To form a perfect picture of Adam and Eve (says an Italian writer on Painting) Adam should be designed by Michael Angelo, and coloured by Titian; Eve designed by Raphael, and coloured by Corregio.—

The ill fortune of Corregio, and the gross neglect of Art, in the very city, which he had adorned with the most exquisite productions of his pencil, are expressed with great feeling in a letter of Annibal Carracci, written while he was studying the works of Corregio, at Parma, to his cousin Lodovico, in 1580.—Vide Raccolta de Lettere, &c. Tom. I. p. 88.

NOTE XVIII. VERSE 284.

Though Parma claim it for her rival son.] Francesco Mazzuoli was born at Parma in 1504, and is thence usually called Parmegiano. His character is thus distinctly marked by Vasari:

" Fu dal cielo largamente dodato di tutte quelle parti, che a un excellente pittore sono richieste, poi che diede alle sue figure, oltre

quello,

quello, che si è detto di molti altri, una certa venusta, dolcezza, e leggiadria nell attitudini, che fu sua propria e particolare."—The same author gives us a particular descripti n of the singular and admirable portrait, which this delicate artist drew of himself reflected from a convex mirror: he relates also some curious circumstances of his allegorical portrait of the emperor Charles the Vth, which he painted by memory, and by the recommendation of Pope Clement the VIIth. presented to the emperor at Bologna.—The honest biographer laments, with great feeling, the errors and misfortunes of this most promising painter, who being seized, early in life, with the frenzy of turning alchemist, impaired his health and fortune by this fatal pursuit; his attachment to which however some authors have questioned: a delirious fever put a period to his melancholy days at the age of thirty-six, in his native city of Parma, 1540.

NOTE XIX. VERSE 290.

Till with pure judgment the Caracci came.] Lodovico Caracci, who with his cousins Annibal and Augustin established the famous Academy of Bologna, was born in that city 1555. The circumstance that occasioned his death, as related by a French author, affords a singular proof how dangerous it is for an Artist to confide in the partial judgment of his particular friends.

Son dernier ouvrage qui est une Annonciation peinte à fresque, dans une des lunettes de la Cathedrale de Bologne, ne reussit pas; son age, une vuê affoiblie, & la grande elevation de l'Eglise furent cause qu'il se confia à un ami pour voir d'en bas l'effet de l'ouvrage. Cet ami lui dit qu'il etoit bien, & qu'il pouvoit faire ôter les Echaufauds: il fut trompé; on critiqua fort cette peinture: Louis s'en chagrina de maniere qu'il se mit au lit, et Bologne perdit ce grand Homme en 1619.—Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres. Paris 8vo. 1762. Tom. II. p. 50.

Augustin,

Auguſtin, who quitted the pencil for the engraver, and is much celebrated for his various accompliſhments, died at Parma in 1602.—Annibal, the immortal Painter of the Farneſe gallery, whom Pouſſin did not heſitate to rank with Raphael himſelf, died in a ſtate of diſtraction at Rome, 1609. This melancholy event is deſcribed in a very affecting letter written by an Italian prelate, who attended him in his laſt moments. Raccolta, Tom. II. p. 384.

NOTE XX. VERSE 295.

Young Zampieri ow'd his nobler name.] Domenico Zampieri, born at Bologna 1518, died at Naples, not without ſuſpicion of poiſon, 1640. —He entered early in life into the ſchool of the Caracci, and was there honoured with the affectionate appellation of Domenichino, from his extreme youth.—His Communion of St. Jerome was compared by the judicious Pouſſin to the Transfiguration of Raphael: yet Du Freſnoy has paſt a ſevere cenſure on Domenichino, and affirms that he has leſs nobleneſs in his works than any other artiſt who ſtudied in the ſchool of the Caracci. So contradictory are the opinions of the two moſt enlightened judges in this delicate art!

NOTE XXI. VERSE 297.

The learned Lanfranc in their ſchool aroſe.] Giovanni Lanfranco, born at Parma 1581, was knighted by Pope Urban the VIIIth, and died at Rome 1647.

NOTE XXII. VERSE 299.

The tender Guido caught his graceful air.] Guido Reni was born in Bologna 1595: exquiſite in grace, though deficient in expreſſion, he was held during his life in the higheſt eſtimation. A fatal paſſion for gaming involved him in continued ſcenes of diſtreſs. His perſonal

 beauty

beauty was ſo great, that his maſter Lodovico Caracci is ſaid to have drawn his angels from the head of Guido.

NOTE XXIII. VERSE 305.

Titian's mute ſcholar, rival of his fame.] Titian is ſaid to have reſided in Spain from the year 1548 to 1553, and ſeems to have raiſed a ſtrong paſſion for Art in that country.—His moſt eminent diſciple was Juan Fernandez Ximenes de Navarrete, who is called by his Spaniſh Biographer, The Titian of Spain.—Though born deaf and dumb, from whence he derives his common title *el Mudo*, he roſe to great reputation as a Painter; and was warmly patronized by his Sovereign, as appears from the following incident—In painting the martyrdom of a Saint, he had introduced the figure of his perſonal enemy, who happened to be the King's Secretary, in the character of the Executioner: the Secretary complained to his maſter, and petitioned that his features might be effaced; but his Majeſty defended the Painter, and ordered the figure to remain.—In praiſing this ſingular genius, I have ventured to borrow ſomething like a conceit from the famous Spaniſh Poet Lope de Vega, who has celebrated his talents in the following verſes.

Del Mudo Pintor famoſiſſimo.

No quiſo el cielo que hablaſſe,
  Porque con mi entendimiento
  Dieſſe mayor ſentimiento
  A las coſas que pintaſſe.
Y tanta vida les di
  Con el pincel ſingular,
  Que como no pude hablar,
  Hize que hablaſſen por mi.

The Poet alſo honoured this favourite Artiſt, who died in 1572, with an Epitaph, which turns on the ſame idea, and which the curious

rious reader may find in the Work, from whence I have taken this short account of him.

Vidas de los Pittores Españoles por Palamino Velasco, Octavo, London, 1744.

NOTE XXIV. VERSE 310.

And thou, Velasquez, share the honour due.] Don Diego Velasquez de Silva, the most accomplished of the Spanish Painters, was born at Seville, 1594, and clos'd his honourable and splendid life at Madrid in 1660.—His master was Pacheco, a Spaniard, who united the sister arts of Painting and Poetry.—Velasquez was patronized by the famous Olivarez, and had the honour of painting our Charles the First, during his visit at Madrid: perhaps he contributed not a little to form the taste and passion for art, by which that Prince was so eminently distinguished. The Spanish Painter rose to great honours in his own country, and had, like Rubens, the singular fortune to unite the character of an Ambassador with that of an Artist, being sent on an extraordinary commission, in 1648, to Pope Innocent X.

One of his most striking historical pictures, was the expulsion of the Moors from Spain; a noble, national subject, which he painted for Philip the Third, in competition with three Artists of reputation, and obtained the preference.

But he is particularly celebrated for the spirit and energy of his Portraits; concerning which there are two singular anecdotes related by his Spanish Biographer; and the following may possibly amuse the reader.

In 1639, he executed a portrait of Don Adrian Pulido Pareja, Commander in chief of an armament appointed to New Spain; and pleased himself so well in the execution, that he affixed his name to the picture; a circumstance not usual with him. He had painted with pencils of uncommon length, for the sake of working at a greater distance, and with peculiar force; so that the picture (says my Spanish author) when near, is not to be distinguished, and at a distance is a miracle. As Velasquez,

after

after this Portrait was finiſhed, was at work in the palace, the King, as uſual, went privately to his apartment to ſee him paint; when obſerving the figure of Pareja, and taking it for the real perſon, he exclaimed with ſurprize, "What! are you ſtill here? have you not "your diſpatches? and why are you not gone?" But ſoon perceiving his miſtake, he turn'd to Velaſquez (who modeſtly doubted the reality of the deception) and ſaid, "I proteſt to you it deceived me." For this ſtory, ſuch as it is, I am indebted to the author whom I have quoted in the preceding Note. The celebrated Murillo, whoſe pictures are much better known in England than thoſe of his maſter, was a diſciple of Velaſquez.

NOTE XXV. VERSE 316.

Thy care the ſoft, the rich Murillo form'd.] Don Bartolome Eſtevan Murillo was born in the neighbourhood of Seville, in 1613. His firſt maſter was Juan de Caſtillo; but he ſoon ſettled in Madrid, under the protection of Velaſquez, who contributed to his improvement in the moſt generous manner. The Spaniards boaſt that Murillo became a great Painter, without ever travelling out of Spain. He is ſaid to have refuſed the offer of an eſtabliſhment in England from Charles the Second, and to have pleaded his age as an excuſe for not quitting his own country; where he died, and was buried with great marks of honour, in 1685.

NOTE XXVI. VERSE 323.

No mean hiſtorian to record their praiſe.] George Vaſari, to whom we are indebted for a moſt valuable hiſtory of Italian Painters, was born at Arezzo in Tuſcany, 1511.—Though the fame of the author ſeems to have eclipſed that of the artiſt, he roſe to conſiderable eminence as a painter, and has left us a particular and entertaining account of himſelf and his pictures in the cloſe of his great work—it is introduced

duced with an apology, in which he ſpeaks of his own talents, and extreme paſſion for his art, in the moſt modeſt and engaging manner.—His generous deſire of doing juſtice to the merit of others is moſt happily rewarded in the following Elogy, by the great Thuanus :

" Ob excellentiam artis, quam hiſtoria accurate & eleganter ſcripta illuſtravit, Georgius Vaſarius meruit, ut inter viros ingenio & literis præſtantes accenſeretur. Is Aretii in Etruria natus, pictor & architectus noſtra ætate præſtantiſſimus, diu magno Etruriæ Duci Coſmo, omnium liberalium artium, inter quas pictura et architectura ut referrentur obtinuit, fautori eximio navavit ; editis paſſim ingenii ſui ad ſtupendum omnium ſpectaculum monumentis, et tandem hoc anno climacterico ſuo v kalend. Quintil. vivis exemptus eſt ; exinde ſicuti teſtamento caverat, Florentiæ ubi deceſſit, Aretium in patriam tranſlatus ; quo loco in principali ſecundum ſedem Epiſcopalem templo in ſacello ab ipſo juxta ſumptuoſo et admirando artificio exſtructo ſepultus.

Thuanus ſub ann. 1574.

NOTE XXVII. VERSE 342.

On her pure Style ſee mild Bologna claim.] The French author quoted above, under the article Caracci, not only ſpeaks with the greateſt warmth of the obligation, which Painting owes to Lodovico Caracci, for having raiſed it from that ſtate of corruption, into which it had fallen in all the ſchools of Italy ; but at the ſame time points out alſo the various manieriſts who had chiefly contributed to its debaſement.

The ſtyle introduced by Lodovico is recommended by that excellent judge Sir Joſhua Reynolds (See Diſcourſe 1769) as better ſuited to grave and dignified ſubjects than the richer brilliancy of Titian.

NOTE XXVIII. VERSE 345.

———————*Titian's golden rays.*] This expreſſion is borrowed from the cloſe of that elegant ſentence of modern Latin, which the author

of Fitzosborne's Letters has so justly commended, "Aureo Titiani radio, qui per totam tabulam gliscens eam verè suam denunciat." See his excellent letter on Metaphors, p. 50.

NOTE XXIX. VERSE 353.

And Raphael's Grace must yield to Rembrandt's Force.] Rembrant Van Pryn, born near Leyden 1606, died at Amsterdam 1674, or, according to some accounts, 1668. The numerous works of this great master, both with the engraver and pencil, have rendered him universally known. His singular studies, and the pride which he seems to have taken in the natural force of his genius, appear strongly marked in the two following passages of his French Biographer.

"Les murs de son attelier couverts de vieux habits, de piques, et d'armures extraordinaires, etoient toutes ses etudes, ainsi qu'une armoire pleine d'etoffes anciennes, & d'autres choses pareilles qu'il avoit coutume d'appeller ses antiques.—Rembrant, qui se glorifioit de n'avoir jamais vu l'Italie, le dit un jour que Vandick l'etoit venu visiter à Amsterdam: & qui lui repondit, "Je le vois bien." Rembrant naturellement brusque reprit: "Qui es tu pour me parler de la sorte?"—Vandick repondit; "Monsieur, je suis Vandick, pour vous servir."—Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres, Tom. III. p. 113.

NOTE XXX. VERSE 356.

Yet, Holland, thy unwearied labours raise.] There is no article of taste, on which different writers have run more warmly into the opposite extremes of admiration and contempt, than in estimating the painters of Holland. Those who are enchanted by the sublime conceptions of the Roman school, are too apt precipitately to condemn every effort of the Dutch pencil as a contemptible performance; while those, who are satisfied with minute and faithful delineations

of nature, find abſolute perfection in the very pictures, which are treated by others with the moſt ſupercilious neglect.—But ſound and impartial judgment ſeems equally to diſclaim this haſty cenſure, and this inordinate praiſe;— and ranking the moſt eminent Dutch artiſts below the great Italian maſters, yet allows them conſiderable and peculiar merit.—A French author ſays, I think not unhappily, of the Dutch painters, that they are "Dans la peinture, ce que le comique & le plaiſant ſont dans la poeſie." In deſign their fort is certainly humour, and they have frequently carried it to great perfection.

NOTE XXXI. Verse 380.

Proud of the praiſe by Rubens' pencil won.] Sir Peter Paul Rubens, who is happily ſtyled by Mr. Walpole, "The Popular Painter," was born at Cologne 1577, and died of the gout at Antwerp 1640. The hiſtory of his life furniſhes a moſt ſtriking incentive to the young painter's ambition.—The many accompliſhments which he poſſeſt, the infinitude of works which he produced, the reputation and eſteem, the various honours and ample fortune which he ſo juſtly acquired, preſent to the mind an animating idea of what may be expected from a happy cultivation of talents in a courſe of conſtant and ſpirited application. Though he viſited the court of Charles the Firſt in the publick character of an ambaſſador, it does not appear how long he reſided here;—Mr. Walpole conjectures about a year.—His pictures in the ceiling at Whitehall were not painted in England; which perhaps is the reaſon he has been at the pains of finiſhing them ſo neatly, that they will bear the neareſt inſpection; for he muſt have well known how greatly the reputation of any work depends on its firſt happy impreſſion on the publick, and concluded his pictures would be viewed by the king and court inſtantly on their arrival, and that the critics would not be candid enough to delay their remarks on them till they were elevated to their intended

tended height. This noble work was falling into decay, from which ſtate it has been lately reſcued by that excellent artiſt Mr. Cipriani, to whoſe care it has been moſt judiciouſly committed to be cleaned and repaired.—Rubens received for this work £.3000.

NOTE XXXII. Verse 388.

Her ſoft Vandyke, while graceful portraits pleaſe.] Sir Anthony Vandyke, the celebrated ſcholar of Rubens, died of the ſame diſorder which proved fatal to his maſter, and at a much earlier period of life. He was born at Antwerp 1598, expired in Black Fryars 1641, and was buried in St. Paul's, near the tomb of John of Gaunt. On his firſt viſit to England he received no encouragement from the Court, but Charles, becoming ſoon afterwards acquainted with his merit, ſent him an invitation to return. Vandyke embraced the offer with joy; and the king, who ſhewed him, by frequent ſittings, the moſt flattering marks of eſteem, conferred on him the honour of knighthood in 1632, rewarding him alſo with the grant of an annuity of £.200 for life.

NOTE XXXIII. Verse 391.

From Flanders firſt the ſecret power ſhe caught.] The Low Countries, though little celebrated for inventive genius, have given to mankind the two ſignal diſcoveries, which have imparted, as it were, a new vital ſpirit both to Literature and to Painting. This honour however has been brought into queſtion—Germany made a ſtrong, but unſucceſsful effort to rob Holland of the glory which ſhe derives from the firſt invention of Printing: and Painting in oil (it has been ſaid) was known in Italy before the time of John Van Eyck, or John of Bruges, as he is commonly called; to whom that diſcovery is generally aſcribed, about the year 1410.——But Vaſari, in his Life of Antonello da Meſſina, relates very particularly the circumſtances of

of Van Eyck's invention, and the subsequent introduction of the secret into Italy. A most learned antiquarian and entertaining writer of our own time has supposed that Van Eyck might possibly "learn the secret of using oil in England, and take the honour of the invention to himself, as we were then a country little known to the world of arts, nor at leisure, from the confusion of the times, to claim the discovery of such a secret."——Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting, Vol. I. p. 29.———The conjecture is not without some little foundation;—but the conjectural claims which either Italy or England can produce to this excellent invention, are by no means sufficiently strong to annihilate the glory of the happy and ingenious Fleming.

Since the preceding part of this Note was written, the reputation both of Van Eyck, and his encomiast Vasari, has been very forcibly attacked in an Essay on Oil-painting, by Mr. Raspe; an Essay which discovers such a zealous attachment to the arts, and such an active pursuit of knowledge, as do great credit to its ingenious author. But, though I have perused it with the attention it deserves, it does not lead me to retract what I had said; because, after all his researches on this subject, it appears that although Oil-painting was not absolutely the invention of Van Eyck, it was yet indebted to him for those improvements which made it of real value to his profession.—The ingenious Fleming seems therefore to be still entitled to those honours that have been lavished on his name, as improvement in such cases is often more useful and more meritorious than invention itself, which is frequently the effect of chance, while the former arises from well-directed study.

NOTE XXXIV. VERSE 395.

Where sumptuous Leo courted every Muse.] The name of Medicis is familiar to every lover of the fine arts. John de Medicis, the Cardinal, was raised to the papal See 1513. He continued that liberal patronage

tronage and encouragement to learning, which had before diſtinguiſhed his illuſtrious family. He was profuſe and magnificent. The various, and celebrated productions of taſte and genius under his pontificate, clearly mark the age of Leo the Xth as one of the great æras of literature.

NOTE XXXV. Verse 405.

Untrodden paths of Art Salvator tried.] Salvator Roſa was born at a village near Naples, in 1615. After a youth of poverty and adventure, he raiſed himſelf by his various and uncommon talents into lucrative reputation. Having paſſed nine years at Florence, in conſiderable employment, he ſettled in Rome, and died there at the age of 58, in 1673.—He was one of the few characters who have poſſeſſed a large portion of pleaſant vivacity and ſatirical humour, with a ſublime imagination. His talents as a painter are univerſally celebrated; but his ſocial virtues, though perhaps not inferior, are far from being ſo generally known. In the "Raccolta di Lettere ſulla Pittura" there are many of his letters to his intimate friend Ricciardi, an Italian poet, and profeſſor of moral philoſophy at Piſa, which perfectly diſplay the warmth of his friendſhip, and the generoſity of his heart.—They contain alſo ſome amuſing anecdotes relating to his profeſſion, and the great delight which he took in diſcovering hiſtorical ſubjects of a peculiar caſt, untouched by other painters, and appearing to an ignorant eye almoſt beyond the limits of his art. He ſeems to deſcribe himſelf with juſtice, as well as energy, in the following words of a letter to Ricciardi "tutto bile, tutto ſpirito, tutto fuoco."—Though he muſt have been wonderfully pleaſant as a companion, and valuable as a friend, yet he laments that his ſatires had made him many enemies, and heartily wiſhes he had never produced them: In that which relates to painting, he expoſes indeed the vices of his brethren with great freedom and ſeverity.—It is remarkable that his

poetry abounds more with learned allusions than with high flights of imagination; yet in the satire I have mentioned, there is much whimsical fancy. An ape is introduced applying to a painter, and begging to learn his profession, as Nature he says has given him a genius for the mimetic arts.—The painter complies—but his disciples after an apprenticeship of ten years, bids his master adieu, with many humorous execrations against the art of Painting,—Other parts of the poem contain many sensible and serious remarks on the abuses of the pencil; and as the author has given us a portrait of himself in his poetical character, I shall present it to the reader as a specimen of his style.

La state all ombra, e il pigro verno al foco
  Tra modesti desii l' anno mi vede
  Pinger per gloria, e poetar per gioco.
Delle fatiche mie scopo, e mercede
  E' sodisfare al genio, al giusto, al vero:
  Chi si sente scottar, ritiri 'l piede.

Dica pur quanto sà rancor severo:
  Contro le sue saette ho doppio usbergo;
  Non conosco interesse, e son sincero:
Non ha l'invidia nel mio petto albergo:
  Solo zelo lo stil m'adatta in mano,
  E per util commune i fogli vergo.

Satire di Salvator Rosa, pag. 68,
Edit. Amsterdam, 1719.

NOTE XXXVI. VERSE 427.

The sage Poussin, with purest fancy fraught.] Nicolas Poussin was born at Andely in Normandy 1594: one of his first patrons was the

 whimsical

whimsical Italian poet Marino, who being struck with some fresco works of the young painter at Paris, employed him in some designs from his own poem l'Adone, and enabled him to undertake an expedition to Rome. He was recalled from thence by Cardinal Richelieu in 1640, but upon the death of Richelieu and the king he returned to Rome, where he ended a life of primitive simplicity and patient application in 1665.

NOTE XXXVII. VERSE 435.

Then rose Le Brun, his scholar, and his friend.] Charles Le Brun, universally known by his Battles of Alexander, and his treatise on the passions, was born in Paris 1619: having presided over the French Academy, with great reputation, more than forty years, he died in 1690, partly, as the author of the Abrégé assures us, from the chagrin which he received from a cabal raised against him in favour of his rival Mignard: but neither his own works, nor the partial favour of his patron Louvois, nor the friendship of Moliere, who has written a long poem in his praise, have been able to raise Mignard to the level of Le Brun.

NOTE XXXVIII. VERSE 441.

Thy dawn, Le Sueur, announc'd a happier taste.] Eustache Le Sueur (who, without the advantage of studying in Italy, approached nearer than any of his countrymen to the manner of Raphael) was a native of Paris. Le Brun, who came to visit him in his last moments, is reported to have said, on quitting his chamber, " Que la mort alloit lui tirer une grosse epine du pied." If he was capable of uttering such a sentiment, at such a time, he thoroughly deserved the fate which is mentioned in the preceding Note.

NOTE XXXIX. VERSE 447.

Though Fresnoy teaches, in Horatian song.] Charles Alfonse du Fresnoy, author of the celebrated Latin poem de Arte graphicâ, very hastily translated into English prose by Dryden, was himself a painter of some eminence, and the intimate friend of Mignard. He died in a village near Paris, at the age of forty-four, in 1665.

NOTES

NOTES

TO THE

SECOND EPISTLE.

NOTE XL. VERSE 15.

THOUGH foreign Theorists, with System blind.] The vain and frivolous speculations of some eminent French authors, concerning our national want of genius for the fine arts, are refuted with great spirit in an ingenious essay by Mr. Barry, entitled, "An Enquiry into the real and imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England." As this work highly distinguishes the elegance of his pen, his Venus rising from the sea does equal honour to his pencil.

NOTE XLI. VERSE 33.

Fierce Harry reign'd, who, soon with pleasure cloy'd.] In this short account of the influence which the different characters of our Sovereigns have had on the progress of national Art, the Author is indebted principally to Mr. Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting.

NOTE XLII. VERSE 45.

Untaught the moral force of Art to feel.] An accomplished Critic of our own time has touched on *the moral Efficacy of Picture*, with his usual elegance and erudition. After having illustrated the subject from

from the writings of Ariſtotle and Xenophon, he concludes his remarks with the following reflection:—"Yet, conſidering its vaſt power in morals, one cannot enough lament the ill deſtiny of this divine art, which, from the chaſte handmaid of Virtue, hath been debauched, in violence of her nature, to a ſhameleſs proſtitute of Vice, and procureſs of Pleaſure."—Hurd's Note on the following line of Horace:

"*Suſpendit picta vultum mentemque tabella.*"

To this let me add one obſervation for the honour of our Engliſh artiſts!—The proſtitution of the pencil, ſo juſtly lamented by this amiable writer, is perhaps leſs frequent in this kingdom, than in any country whatever, in which Painting has been known to riſe to an equal degree of perfection.

NOTE XLIII. VERSE 93.

Yet to thy Palace Kneller's ſkill ſupplied.] Sir Godfrey Kneller, born at Lubec 1646, ſettled in England 1674, was knighted by King William, created a Baronet by George the Firſt, and died 1723.—No Painter was ever more flattered by the Muſes; who gave him credit for talents which he never diſplayed. Dryden ſays, in his enchanting Epiſtle to Kneller:

Thy genius, bounded by the times, like mine,
Drudges on petty draughts, nor dares deſign
A more exalted work, and more divine.

But the drudgery of the Poet aroſe from the moſt cruel neceſſity; that of the Painter, from avarice, the bane of excellence in every profeſſion!—If Sir Godfrey had any talents for hiſtory, which is ſurely very doubtful, we have, as Mr. Walpole well obſerves, no reaſon to regret that he was confined to portraits, as his pencil has faithfully tranſmitted to us "*ſo many ornaments of an illuſtrious age.*"

Though

Though I have partly ſubſcribed to the general idea, that William, in whoſe reign this Painter principally flouriſhed, "contributed nothing to the advancement of arts," yet I muſt obſerve, that his employing Kneller to paint the Beauties at Hampton Court, his rewarding him with knighthood, and the additional preſent of a gold medal and chain, weighing £. 300, may juſtify thoſe lines of Pope, which deſcribe "The Hero, William," as an encourager of Painting.

NOTE XLIV. VERSE 97.

While partial Taſte from modeſt Riley turn'd,] John Riley was born in London 1646: Mr. Walpole relates an anecdote of his being much mortified by Charles the Second; who, looking at his own picture, exclaim'd, "Is this like me? then, Ods-fiſh, I am an ugly fellow."—The ſame author ſays happily of this artiſt, "With a quarter of Sir Godfrey's vanity, he might have perſuaded the world he was as great a maſter." Notwithſtanding his extreme modeſty, he had the good fortune to be appointed Principal Painter, ſoon after the Revolution, but died an early martyr to the gout 1691.

NOTE XLV. VERSE 101.

And Thornhill's blaze of Allegory gilt.] Sir James Thornhill, born in Dorſetſhire 1676, was nephew to the celebrated Sydenham, and educated by the liberality of that great phyſician. He afterwards acquired a very ample fortune by his own profeſſion; was in parliament for Weymouth, knighted by George the Second, and died 1732.—His talents as a Painter are univerſally known, from his principal works at Greenwich, St. Paul's, &c.

NOTE XLVI. VERSE 111.

The youthful Noble, on a princely plan.] About twenty years ago, the preſent Duke of Richmond opened, in his houſe at Whitehall, a gallery

a gallery for artiſts, completely filled with a ſmall but well-choſen collection of caſts from the antique, and engaged two eminent artiſts to ſuperintend and direct the ſtudents.—This noble encouragement of art, though superſeded by a royal eſtabliſhment, is ſtill entitled to remembrance and honour: it not only ſerved as a prelude to more extenſive inſtitutions, but contributed much towards forming ſome capital artiſts of the preſent time. The name of Mortimer is alone ſufficient to reflect a conſiderable luſtre on this early ſchool.

NOTE XLVII. VERSE 134.

Teach but thy tranſient tints no more to fly.] Although the ſuperior excellencies of this admirable artiſt make us peculiarly regret the want of durability in his exquiſite productions; yet he is far from being the only artiſt, whoſe pictures ſoon diſcover an appearance of precipitate decay. Fugitive colouring ſeems indeed to be the chief defect among our preſent painters in oil; and it muſt be the moſt ardent wiſh of every lover of art, that ſo great an evil may be effectually remedied. As the Royal Academy is a ſociety of enlightened artiſts, eſtabliſhed for the improvement of every branch of Painting, it may be hoped that they will pay attention to this mechanical point, as well as to the nobler acquirements of art, and employ ſome perſon, who has patience and abilities for ſuch an office, to diſcover, by a courſe of experiments, to what cauſe this important evil is owing. If it be found to ariſe from the adulteration of colours, oils, and varniſhes, might it not be eligible for the Academy to follow the example of another profeſſion, who, where health and life are concerned, obviate the difficulty of getting their articles genuine from the individual trader, by opening a ſhop at the expence of the Society, to prepare and ſell the various ingredients, free from thoſe adulterations which private intereſt might otherwiſe produce?

But there may be no juſt ground of complaint againſt the integrity of the colourman, and this failure may perhaps ariſe from the artiſt's

mixing his colours, and their vehicles in improper proportions to each other; that is, instead of painting with oil properly thickened with colour, using oil only fully stained with it, to which a proper consistence (or body as the painters call it) is given by strong gum varnishes; in short, using more vehicle than colour; by which, although most brilliant and transparent effects may be produced, yet the particles of colour are too much attenuated, and divided from each other, and consequently less able to withstand the destructive action of light. If the deficiency complained of originates from this source, the Academy, by a careful course of experiments, may be able clearly to ascertain what preparations of the more delicate colours are most durable; what oils and varnishes will best preserve the original brilliancy of the paint; what are the best proportions for this purpose in which they can be used; and how far glazing (that almost irresistible temptation to oil-painters) may or may not be depended on. All these points are at present so far from being known with certainty, that perhaps there are not two Painters, who think perfectly alike on any one of them. The author hopes, that the gentlemen of the pencil will pardon his presuming to offer a hint on this delicate subject, with which he does not pretend to be intimately acquainted. The ideas, which he has thus ventured to address to them, arise only from the most ardent wish, that future ages may have a just and adequate sense of the flourishing state of Painting in England in the reign of George the Third, and that our present excellent artists may not be reduced to depend on the uncertain hand of the engraver for the esteem of posterity.

A very liberal Critic*, in his flattering remarks on the Poem, seems, in speaking of this Note, to mistake a little the meaning of its author, who alluded only to that defect in colouring, where the finer tints are so managed, for the sake of an immediate and short-liv'd brilliancy, that they sink very soon into no colour at all. He did not

* *Vide* the Gentleman's Magazine for November 1778, page 526.

mean to touch on thoſe changes in Painting, where the colours all grow darker, the lights become brown, and the ſhadows one maſs of black. This is likewiſe a great evil, and calls aloud for redreſs. Perhaps the Critic above mentioned has pointed out the true cauſe of this defect, *viz.* the indiſcriminate blending of the colours, and the not uſing pure, ſimple, uncompounded tints.

NOTE XLVIII. VERSE 138.

The leading Principles of liberal Art.] I embrace with pleaſure the opportunity of paying this tribute to the great artiſt here mentioned, who is not only at the head of his own profeſſion, but may juſtly be ranked among the firſt writers of the age. His diſcourſes, not merely calculated for the improvement of the young artiſts to whom they are addreſſed, contain all the principles of true and univerſal taſte, embelliſhed with great brilliancy of imagination, and with equal force of expreſſion.

NOTE XLIX. VERSE 151.

Thy Ugolino, &c.] As the ſubject of this admirable picture is taken from a poet ſo little known to the Engliſh reader as Dante, it may not perhaps be impertinent to ſay, that in Richardſon's Diſcourſe on the Science of a Connoiſſeur, there is a tranſlation of the ſtory in Engliſh blank verſe. A young and noble author, now living, has obliged the world with a tranſlation of it in rhyme.—As to the picture, no artiſt could expreſs more happily the wild and ſublime ſpirit of the poet from whom he drew. We may juſtly apply to him the compliment which a lively Italian addreſſed to a great man of his own country, but of far inferior expreſſion.

" Fabro gentil, ben ſai,
Ch' ancor tragico caſo e' caro Oggetto,
E che ſpeſſo l' Horror va col Diletto."

Marino.

NOTE L. VERSE 165.

Now Art exults, with annual Triumphs gay.] While we are delighted with the increaſing ſplendor of theſe annual entertainments, it is but juſt to remember, that we are indebted to the Society of Arts and Sciences for our firſt public exhibition of Paintings. The different ſocieties of artiſts ſoon followed ſo excellent an example; and our rapid and various improvements in this lovely art reflect the higheſt honour on this happy inſtitution. Our exhibitions at once afford both the beſt nurſery for the protection of infant genius, and the nobleſt field for the diſplay of accompliſhed merit: nor do they only adminiſter to the benefit of the artiſt, and the pleaſure of the publick: they have ſtill a more exalted tendency; and when national ſubjects are painted with dignity and force, our exhibitions may juſtly be regarded as ſchools of public virtue. Perhaps the young ſoldier can never be more warmly animated to the ſervice of his country, than by gazing, with the delighted public, on a ſublime picture of the expiring hero, who died with glory in her defence. But, not to dwell on their power of inſpiring martial enthuſiaſm, our exhibitions may be ſaid to have a happy influence on the manners and morals of thoſe, who fill the different departments of more tranquil life. In ſupport of this ſentiment I beg leave to tranſcribe the following judicious remark from an author, who has lately obliged the public with two little volumes of elegant and ſpirited Eſſays. "They, whoſe natural feelings have been properly improved by culture, nor have yet become callous by attrition with the world, know from experience, how the heart is mollified, the manners poliſhed, and the temper ſweetened, by a well-directed ſtudy of the arts of imitation. The ſame ſenſibility of artificial excellence, extends itſelf to the perception of natural and moral beauty; and the ſtudent returns from the artiſt's gallery to his ſtation in ſociety, with a breaſt more diſpoſed to feel and to reverberate the endearments of ſocial life, and of reciprocal benevolence."——KNOX's Eſſays, moral and literary, 1778, p. 264, on Sculpture.

NOTE LI. VERSE 255.

Thy Talents, Hogarth! &c.] William Hogarth was born in London, 1698, and put apprentice to an engraver of the moſt ordinary claſs; but his comic talents, which are ſaid to have appeared firſt in the prints to Hudibras, ſoon raiſed him to fame and fortune.—He married a daughter of Sir James Thornhill, and died 1764.—The peculiar merits of his pencil are unqueſtionable. His Analyſis of Beauty has been found more open to diſpute; but however the greater adepts in the ſcience may differ on its principles, it may certainly be called an honourable monument of his genius and application.

NOTE LII. VERSE 370.

Whoſe needy Titian calls for ill-paid gold.] Richardſon has fallen into a miſtake concerning the famous Danae, and other pictures of Titian, which he ſays (in quoting a letter of Titian's without conſidering its addreſs) were painted for Henry the VIIIth of England, a tyrant indeed, voluptuous, and cruel, but ſtill leſs deteſtable than the ſullen and unnatural Philip the IId of Spain, who filled up the meaſure of his ſuperior guilt by the horrid aſſaſſination of his ſon. Philip, on his marriage with Mary, aſſumed the title of King of England; and to him Titian addreſſed the letter, which ſpeaks of the pictures in queſtion: the painter frequently mentions his attachment to his unworthy patron.

His ſollicitude to enſure his protection and favour is ſtrongly marked in the following ſhort paſſage of a letter which he addreſſed to one of Philip's attendants. "Mando ora la poeſia di Venere e Adone, nella quale V. S. vedrà, quanto ſpirito e amore ſo mettere nell' opere di ſua Maeſtà."——Raccolta, tom. ii. p. 21.

How poorly this great artiſt was rewarded for his ill-directed labour, appears very forcibly in a long letter of complaint, which he had ſpirit enough to addreſs to the king on the many hardſhips he ſuffered in being unable to obtain the payment of the penſion which

had been granted to him by the emperor Charles the Vth.——Raccolta, tom. ii. p. 379.

NOTE LIII. Verse 436.

Bid Engliſh pencils honour Engliſh worth.] The great encouragement given our painters to ſelect ſubjects from Engliſh hiſtory, has of late years been very obſervable. Many individuals of rank and fortune have promoted this laudable plan with ſpirit and effect; and the Society of Arts and Sciences have confined their premiums to ſubjects taken from the Britiſh Annals.

NOTE LIV. Verse 441.

Her wounded Sidney, Bayard's perfect peer.] The gallant, the amiable and accompliſhed Sir Philip Sidney may be juſtly placed on a level with the noble Bayard, "Le Chevalier ſans peur & ſans reproche." whoſe glory has of late received new luſtre from the pen of Robertſon and the pencil of Weſt. The ſtriking ſcene here alluded to, which preceded the death of Sidney, has not yet, I believe, appeared upon canvaſs, but is forcibly deſcribed by the noble and enthuſiaſtic friend of Sidney, the Lord Brooke.——See Biograph. Britan. Art. Sidney.

The particulars alſo are minutely deſcribed, and with great feeling, in a letter from his uncle Leiceſter to Sir Thomas Heneage, quoted in Collins's Memoirs of the Sidnies. The tide of national admiration flowed very ſtrong in favour of Sidney, when Mr. Walpole, in ſpeaking of Lord Brooke, appeared to check the current; but the merits of Sidney are ſufficient to bear down all oppoſition.—Inſtead of joining the elegant author I have mentioned, in conſidering Sir Philip Sidney as "an aſtoniſhing object of temporary admiration," I am ſurprized that ſo judicious an author ſhould ever queſtion ſo fair a title to univerſal regard. The learning and munificence, the courage and

and courtesy of Sidney endeared him to every rank, and he justly challenges the lasting affection of his country from the closing scene of his life, in which heroism and humanity are so beautifully blended. I never can think this accomplished character any ways degraded by his having written a tedious romance (in which however there are many touches of exquisite beauty and spirit) to amuse a most amiable sister, whom he tenderly loved; or by his having threatened an unworthy servant of his father's with death in a hasty billet, merely to intimidate and deter him from the future commission of an infamous breach of trust, in opening his letters.

NOTE LV. VERSE 468.

Th' heroic Daughter of the virtuous More.] Margaret, eldest daughter of the celebrated Sir Thomas More. The scene which I have proposed for the subject of a picture, is taken from the following passage in Ballard:

" After Sir Thomas More was beheaded, she took care for the burial of his body in the chapel of St. Peter's ad Vincula, within the precincts of the Tower, and afterwards she procured his corpse to be removed, and buried in the chancel of the church at Chelsea, as Sir Thomas More, in his life-time, had appointed. His head having remained about fourteen days upon London Bridge, and being to be cast into the Thames to make room for others, she bought it. For this she was summoned before the council, as the same author relates, and behaved with the greatest firmness, justifying her conduct upon principles of humanity and filial piety. She was, however, imprisoned, but soon released, and dying nine years after her father, at the age of thirty-six, was buried at St. Dunstan's, in Canterbury. The head of her father, which she had preserved with religious veneration, in a box of lead, was, at her particular request, committed with her to the grave. It was seen standing on her coffin in the year 1715, when the vault of the Roper (her husband's) family was opened."——See Ballard's Memoirs of learned Ladies, p. 36.

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The character of this amiable woman is happily drawn both by Addison and Walpole.—She married, at the age of twenty, William Roper, Esquire, of Kent, to the infinite satisfaction of her father; for she seems to have been the dearest object of his parental affection, which is very strongly marked in his letters addressed to her. She was indeed most eminently distinguished by her learning, in an age, when the graces of the mind were regarded as an essential article in female education: but the beauty and force of her filial piety reflects a still superior lustre on this accomplished woman.—There is more than one passage in her life, which would furnish an admirable subject for the pencil. Her interview with her father, on his return to the Tower, is mentioned as such by Mr. Walpole.

NOTE LVI. VERSE 523.

But, oh! how poor the prostrate Satan lies.] It is remarkable, that the greatest painters have failed in this particular. Raphael, Guido, and West, are all deficient in the figure of Satan. Richardson observes, in his description of the pictures of Italy,—"Je n'ai jamais vu d'aucun Maître une representation du Diable, prince des Diables, qui me satisfit." Page 500.

In recommending this subject to the pencil, it may be proper to observe, that it is not only extremely difficult, but even attended with danger, if we credit the following curious anecdote, in a medical writer of great reputation:—Spinello, fameux Peintre Toscan, ayant peint la chute des anges rebelles, donna des traits si terribles à Lucifer, qu'il en fut lui-meme saisi d'horreur, & tout le reste de sa vie il crut voir continuellement ce Demon lui reprocher de l'avoir representé sous une figure si hidieuse.——Tissot de la Santé des Gens de Lettres.

As this story is so singular, it may amuse some readers to see it in the words of Vasari, from whom Tissot seems to have taken it.—The Italian Biographer says, in describing a picture by Spinello Aretino,

no, who flouriſhed in the cloſe of the 14th century, Si vede un Lucifero gia mutato in beſtia bruttiſſima. E ſi compiacque tanto Spinello di farlo orribile, e contraffatto, che ſi dice (tanto puo alcuna fiata l'immaginazione) che la detta figura da lui dipinta gl'apparue in ſogno domandandolo, doue egli l'hauveſſe veduta ſi brutta e per che fattole tale ſcorno con i ſuoi pennelli: E che egli ſvegliatoſi dal ſonno, per la paura, non potendo gridare, con tremito grandiſſimo ſi ſcoſſe di maniera che la moglie deſtataſi lo ſoccorſe: ma niente di manco fu per cio a riſchio, ſtringendogli il cuore, di morirſi per cotale accidente, ſubitamente. Ben che ad ogni modo ſpiritaticcio, e con occhi tondi, poco tempo vivendo poi ſi conduſſe alla morte laſciando di ſe gran deſiderio a gli amici.——Vaſari Vita di Spinello Aretino, pag. 218. Edit. di Giunti.

F I N I S.